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A VERY OLD GAME.

"We shan't be always young, dear,
Let's frolic while we may;
If graybeards wag their tongue, dear,
Well, let them wag away.

"Then first a thousand kisses,
And next a hundred more—
No niggards of our blisses,
We'll still run up the score.

"Another thousand, come, dear—
A second hundred—so!
Again the self-same sum, dear,
Third time brings luck, you know.

"But counting, dear, is scurvy—
We'll let the kiss-heap mount,
Then knock it topsy-turvy
To make us lose our count."

—CATULLUS.

TRIED AS BY FIRE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STRANGERS STILL," "PRINCE AND PEASANT," "THE LIGHTS OF ROCKBY," "A WOMAN'S SIN," ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

IT WAS only when she had left the earl that Margaret noticed how kind and gracious he had been. He had not only bought the copy of the Guido, and commissioned another picture of her, but he had walked by her side and smiled upon her, treating her almost as an equal, with a difference and gentleness indeed which seemed to indicate that he thought her a superior.

"I'll go into the woods and find a subject at once," she said to herself. "And it shall be my very best picture, or—I'll know the reason why! No wonder people are fond of lords and ladies if they are all like the great Earl of Ferrers."

No doubt if she had known the contents of the letter he had written to Messrs. Tyler and Driver, she would have thought still more highly of him!

She had a sketch book and pencil in her hand, and she went through to the woods that fringed the Court lawns on three sides.

They were lovely woods: there was no more beautiful place in England than Leyton Court, and Margaret almost forgot the purpose for which she had come, as she sat in a little bushy dell, through which ran a tiny stream, tumbling in silvery cascades over the boulders rounded by the hand of Time.

But presently, when she had drank deep of its beauty, she began to make a sketch of the dell.

What a lucky girl she was! The possessor of the silver medal, an exhibitor in the Academy, and now commissioned by no less a personage than the Earl of Ferrers!

"I shall be really famous if I go on like this," she said to herself, with a soft laugh.

Then the laugh died out on her lips, for, with a sudden spring, a young man reached the rock she was at that moment sketching, and from it dropped to her side.

It was Lord Leyton.

Margaret was so startled that she let the sketch-book fall from her hand, and sat looking at him, with the color slowly fading from her face. She had succeeded in forgetting him for a short hour or two, and here he was at her side again.

And Lord Blair assuredly looked, if not startled, pale and haggard.

For the last two days, since he had left Margaret, overwhelmed by his passionate outburst, he had been living after his wildest and most reckless fashion, and two days of such dissipation and sleeplessness, added to passion, tell even upon such perfect physical specimens of humanity as Blair Leyton.

"Lord Leyton!" she said at last.

He picked up her sketch book, but held it, still looking at her.

"I've frightened you," he said, remorsefully; "I—I am a brute. I did not know you were here until I jumped upon that stone, when I was close upon you."

Margaret tried to smile.

"It does not matter," she said. "Give me my block, please," and she held out her hand.

He drew a little nearer, and gave her the block.

"You are sketching?" he said, his eyes fixed on her face with a wistful eagerness.

She inclined her head.

"Yes, I am painting a picture for the earl."

"For the earl," he repeated slowly, as if her voice, and not the words she said, were of importance to him.

"Yes. If you wish to see him, you will find him at home. He has just left me."

"Just left you!" he repeated as before. "No; I don't want to see him."

Margaret raised her eyes and looked at him.

"You have not come down to see him?" she said with faint surprise.

"No!" he responded. "He wouldn't see me if I had. But I didn't come to see him; I came——" then he stopped for a second. "Miss Margaret, I am afraid to tell you *why* I came.

"Then don't tell me," said Margaret, trying to force a smile. "It sounds as if you came for no good purpose, my lord."

He stood silent for a second, then he flung himself at her feet, and leaning on his elbow, looked at her with the same eager wistfulness in his handsome eyes.

"Yes, I will tell you," he said; "I came to see you!"

"To see me?" said Margaret flushing. Then the straight brows came together. "Lord Leyton, you should not have said that!"

"Why should I not?" he demanded, "if it's true,—and it is true! Miss Margaret I have been the wretchedest man in London these last two days."

"I doubt that," said Margaret quietly, and going on with her sketch.

"It's the truth. If there was a man condemned to be hanged, I'll wager he wasn't more wretched than I have been."

"Wicked people are always wretched,—or should be, my lord," said Margaret coolly.

"And I am wicked. Yes, I know," he said; "I am the vilest of the vile, in your eyes. But it isn't for what I've done in the past that I'm so miserable, it is for what I said to you in the picture gallery the other morning. Miss Margaret, I behaved like a brute! I—I—said words that—that have made me wish I were dead——"

"That will do, Lord Leyton," said Margaret, interrupting him. "If you are so sorry they need be no more said excepting that I forgive you and will forget them. I knew that you did not mean them at the time."

His face crimsoned, and his eyes grew almost fierce.

"Stop," he said; "I don't say that. I won't. I'm sorry I was rough; I'm sorry I behaved like a bear and blared and shouted, but I did mean what I said, and I mean it still."

"I don't care whether you meant it or not, it is not of the least consequence, Lord Leyton," said Margaret, and she put her pencil in its case, and closed her sketch-book.

"Wait—do wait!" he exclaimed. "Don't go yet. I have so much to say to you, so much, and I don't know how to say it! Miss Margaret, I came down on the chance of seeing you, and all the way down I prepared a speech, but the sight of you so suddenly has driven it all out of my head, and I can think of nothing but three words of it—and those I dare not say."

"I must go, my lord," said Margaret, trying to speak calmly and indifferently, but feeling her heart beginning to throb and quiver under the sound of his voice, and the passionate regard of his dark eyes.

"Wait—wait five minutes," he implored. "Miss Margaret, don't send me back to London feeling that you despise me. Don't do that! I'm bad enough as it is, but I shall be worse if you do that."

Margaret sank down on the stones again, and listened with her eyes guarded by their long lashes; but she still could see his face.

He drew himself a little nearer.

"Miss Margaret, are you a witch?"

"A witch? she faltered.

"Yes," he said. "I think you must be one, for you have bewitched me.

"Lord Leyton——"

"Am I not bewitched?" he said, holding out his hands appealingly; "isn't a man bewitched when he can only think of one thing, day and night, and can get no rest or sleep for thinking of it! And that's how it is with me. I can think of nothing but you."

Margaret made a motion to get up, but he laid his hand on the edge of her skirt imploringly.

"That is how it is with me!" he went on. "I'll tell you the simple truth. I—I have never felt like it before. None of the women I ever met made me feel like this! What is it you have done to me to steal the heart out of my body, for I feel that it is gone—gone?" and he touched his breast with his finger.

Margaret tried to smile, but there is a tragedy in real passion which, however wild the language, forbids laughter, and Lord Leyton's passion was real.

"I see your face all day, I hear your voice. I go over every word you said to me—and some of them were hard words!—and—and to-day I felt that I must get near you, that I must come down to Leyton if I died for it. Do you believe what I say?

"I know that I should not listen to you, my lord," she said in a low voice.

"Why not?" he said. "It is true. Miss Margaret, you have stolen my heart; what is there left to me? I have come because I must, and now I am here I am no better, for I feel that I must tell you more, all that there is to tell, even if you send me away. But don't do that if you can help it, for Heaven's sake don't do that!" And she saw that his lips were quivering. "Margaret, you know what I would say," he went on, in the low, thrilling tones of a young and strong man's passion. "I love you."

Margaret did not start, but a red flush rose and covered her face, then left it pale even to whiteness, and she sat as if turned to stone.

"I love you! Dear, I love you!" he murmured. Do you—will you not believe me?"

She opened her lips, but he put up his hand.

"No, don't speak—not yet. I know what you were going to say. You were going to say that it is impossible, that we only met a few days ago, that we are strangers. Yes, I know that is what you would say. But it is of no use to say that. Do you think people can get to love by knowing each other a certain number of months—years? Margaret, I think I loved you when I saw you in the village the first time; I know I loved you when you sat by my side in the garden and let me put the rose in your dress! Only a few days ago! Why, it seems years to me—it *is* years! Oh, Margaret, dont be hard and cruel, and you can be so hard, so cruel! See here; I lay all my life at your feet! It's a bad lot, I know! Why, I told you so, didn't I? But—but I'll change all that. You shall see! Let me go on loving you; let me hope that some day, you'll try and love me a little in return, and I'll turn over a new leaf! I can never be worthy of you. Oh, I know that. Why, where is there a man in all the world who could be worthy to touch the edge of your dress?" And as he spoke he raised her skirt to his lips, and far from touching herself as his lips were, she seemed to feel them. "But every day, every hour, if you will let me love you, I'll tell myself that I'm of some consequence to someone in the world, and that will keep me straight! Margaret—" he paused and crept a little nearer—"Margaret, you are an angel, and I am—well, just the other thing; but I ask you to be my guardian angel! Dear if you knew how I love you! I cannot get your face from before my eyes; every word you have uttered sings in my heart! I am bewitched, bewitched! And—and all I can say is, let me love you all my life, and try to love me a little!"

Pale, trembling, Margaret listened, her eyes downcast, her hands clasped tightly in her lap.

It was all so new, so strange, so unexpected, that her heart throbbed and her brain whirled. His words in their passionate assertion and entreaty seemed to penetrate to her soul, and with it all a sense of ineffable joy and delight suffused her whole being and ran through every vein.

"You won't speak to me?" he said with a quick sigh that was almost like a sob. "I see how it is! I am not fit—yes, I know! And I have offended you worse than I did the other morning. I—I am a fool and I have destroyed my only chance! I meant to be so quiet and—and gentle to you, but I can't teach myself to keep quiet and soft spoken when my heart is all on fire, and I long to clasp you in my arms and hear you tell me that you love me! Margaret, my good angel! Margaret, won't you say one little word to me? Not to send me away, but to tell me that, bad as I am, you will—well, think a little kindly of me!"

He had drawn himself still closer so that his face almost touched the face of her sleeves, and she could see the quiver of his lips under the thick moustache.

He waited a moment, then his head drooped.

"All right," he said. "Don't speak. I see how it is. No, I'd rather you didn't speak. I might have known that you wouldn't listen to me, that you wouldn't give me any kind of hope. Good Lord, why should you? Well, I'll take myself off; I'll get out of your sight."

He half raised himself, but Margaret's hand stole out and fell, light as a feather, on his arm.

He seized it as a man dying of thirst in the desert seizes the cup of water that will save him and covered it with hot passionate kisses.

"No, no!" she breathed, trying to draw it away. "You—you have unnerved me, Lord Leyton!"

"Go on!" he said. "I can bear it better if you will let me keep your hand!" and he pressed it to his lips again. "What are you going to say, Margaret? Don't be hard upon me!"

"Hard!—how can I be hard?" she faltered, and the tears came thickly into her sweet eyes. "How could anybody be hard after such—such things as you have said? But—but—oh, my lord!—isn't it all a mistake? You—you cannot lov——it is impossible!"

"Just what I told myself!" he exclaimed almost triumphantly. "I said it was im-

possible! But a starving man won't persuade himself that he isn't hungry by telling himself that he had something to eat a week ago! Margaret I love you,—I *do* love you!" and he pressed her hand against his heart, which throbbed passionately under her fingers like an imprisoned bird. "You know that it is true,—do you not?"

"I—I think it is true!" she faltered in all modesty, in all honesty, but with a strange look in her face; "I don't know! No one has ever spoken to me as you have spoken; no one,—no one!"

"Thank God for it!" he exclaimed. "I couldn't bear to think that any other man had been before me, Margaret! And will you try—oh, my dear, be good to me!—will you try and love me——"

She turned her eyes upon him with a grave, touching appeal which rendered her face angelic in its perfect maidenly innocence and trustfulness.

"I—I will try," she murmured in so low a voice that it is wonderful that he should have heard it.

But he did hear it, and leaning forward, caught her in his arms and drew her to him until her head rested on his shoulders, her face against his.

Then, as his lips clung to hers in the first love kiss that man had ever imprinted there, she drew back, startled and trembling.

"Margaret, dearest!" he exclaimed, in tender reproach, attempting to take her in his embrace again.

"No, no!" she panted. "Not yet—not yet! I am not sure——"

"Of me, of my love, dearest? Not sure?" he murmured reproachfully.

"Not sure of myself!" she said, locking her hands together. "I—I must think, I cannot think now. Ah, you have bewitched me——" and she put her hand to her brow, and looked down at him with a far away, puzzled look. "I want to be alone, to think it all over. It seems too—too wild and improbable——"

"Think now, dearest. Give me your hand. I will not speak, I will not look at you!" he said, soothingly.

"No, no!" she said, almost fearfully, drawing her hand from him; and rising, she stood as if half giddy.

"You will leave me," he said piteously, "with only one——"

"I have said I—I will try!" she answered. "I will go now."

He sprang to his feet.

"Let me come with you—to the house, my dearest," he pleaded.

But she put up her hand.

"No; go now! We shall meet again—perhaps—soon."

"Yes, yes!" he responded, catching at the slightest straw of encouragement, like a drowning man. "I won't hurry you or harass you, Margaret! I will try and be gentle with you! see! But you will let me come again soon? You will meet me here to-morrow, Margaret?" he added anxiously.

"The—the day after," she faltered. "Good bye!"

He took her hand and held it to his lips, then she drew it away, and seemed to vanish from his sight.

At twenty paces she stopped, however, and holding up the hand he had kissed and pressed against his heart, she looked at it with a curious look, then laid her lips where his had touched it.

Poor Margaret!

CHAPTER X.

AUSTIN AMBROSE had his chambers in the Albany. He was not a rich man, as he had remarked, but the rooms were comfortably, even luxuriously furnished, and the taste displayed in their ornamentation and decoration was of the best. There were good pictures, rare china, and bronzes, that, if not priceless, were curious enough to be reckoned as valuable.

How Mr. Austin Ambrose lived is a mystery, just as he himself was somewhat of a mystery. He was supposed to have a small income, and he was known to play an admirable hand at whist, and to wield a remarkable good cue at billiards.

He was also a capital judge of a horse, and it was conjectured that he added to his certain income by these usually uncertain adjuncts.

On the evening of Blair's avowal in the Leyton Woods, Austin Ambrose sat over the desert which followed his modest meal.

A bottle of fine claret was on the table, and he was sipping this in silent abstraction, when the door burst open, and Lord Blair rushed in.

Austin Ambrose looked up without a particle of surprise, but with a faint smile of irony.

"House on fire?" he said.

"My dear old chappie!" exclaimed Blair laying his strong hand on Austin's shoulder.

"Seen her? Seen whom?" said Austin, raising his brows as if trying to recollect, whereas he had been thinking of the "her" as Blair rushed in. "Oh, the young lady, Miss—Miss Hale."

"Of course, of course!" exclaimed Blair, pacing up and down the room. "Austin, old fellow, I don't know where to begin. I've only just come back from Leyton and from her! Austin, she is an angel!"

"I daresay," was the cool comment. "And so you have been to Leyton. Another fight, Blair?"

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Lord Blair. "Be serious, old fellow. My heart is bursting with it all."

"Perhaps it will burst all the easier,—at any rate you will be more comfortable,—if you sit down," said Austin Ambrose, dragging a chair forward without rising. "Sit down man, and don't wear my carpet out. I'm not rich enough to afford another, you know."

Lord Blair sank into the chair and took the wine which the other man poured out for him.

"So you have been down to Leyton, Blair, have you? 'Pon my word, I didn't think you were so hard hit!"

Lord Blair made a gesture of impatience.

"I told you that I loved her" said he almost savagely.

Austin Ambrose shrugged his shoulders and raised his eyebrows.

"My dear fellow, you have made the same interesting remark about so many women!"

"No!" said Blair vehemently. "I have never spoken about any other woman as I have spoken to you about her, because I have never felt for any other woman as I feel for her. Austin, if you could see her! She is the most beautiful creature that you ever saw, and so modest, so sweet, so refined, so— there, if I were to rave about her from now to midnight I should not give you an idea of what she is like! Do you know that picture of Gainsborough, the girl gathering flowers—but there, what is the use of trying to describe her!"

"There is no use," said Austin, sipping his wine critically and lighting a cigar.

"No, and to you, especially!" said Lord Blair. As well talk to a stone image. You know nothing of love or women!"

"Not the least," he said cheerfully and placidly. "Love and women are not in my line. Wine and weeds and a good suit of trumps now—but tell me about her, for I know you are dying to. You saw her?"

"Yes, I saw her!" assented Lord Blair with a long sigh.

"And is that all?" asked Ambrose carelessly, but with a certain quick attentive look in the corner of his cold grey eye. "Simply raised your hat and said 'good day!'"

"No, by the lord no! I spent an hour with her—I think—don't know—I lost all count of time, of everything."

"You talked to her? Did you mention that you had lost your senses—I mean your heart?

"No chaffing about her, Austin," said Lord Blair almost sternly, and with the look of passion that came so readily to his frank eyes. "Yes, I *did* tell her that I loved her!" he said, after a moment's pause.

Austin Ambrose looked over Blair's head without a particle of expression in his eyes.

"And may one ask how she took it? he said as carelessly as politeness would permit, but with his attention acutely on the alert, "what did she say?"

"I can't tell you all she said, I wouldn't if I could," said Blair, the color coming to his face, his eyes glowing with a wrapt look. "She gave me no direct answer. I—I have to wait, Austin. Oh, how can I wait! The hours will seem years. Don't laugh, or I shall get up and kill you," he broke off, blushing, but half in earnest. "Austin, if ever a man loved with all his heart, and mind, and body, and soul, I love her!"

"Yes—" said Austin slowly, almost gravely, "I think you do."

There was a moment's silence.

"And you propose—what do you propose?" he said quietly; "Do you mean to marry her?"

Blair sprang to his feet and his face turned white.

"Tut, tut, man," remarked Austin Ambrose, with perfect coolness, "you don't always marry them!"

Lord Blair sank back into his chair with a look of remorse and shame that was of more credit to him than any other expression could have been.

"You hit me fairly, Austin," he said, almost hoarsely. "But—but—all that has gone forever, I hope! I—I turn over a new leaf from to-day, please Heaven! Do I mean to marry her? Yes, yes! If she will have me! If she will stoop, the angel to pick me up out of the mud with her pure white hand, I mean to go to the earl, and say—'My lord, this is my future wife!" and he sprang up and began to pace the floor,

Austin Ambrose sipped his wine.

"Hem!" he said slowly. "I don't think I should do that if I were in your place, Blair."

Lord Blair stopped.

"You wouldn't—why not?"

Austin Ambrose was silent for a moment, then he set down his glass and leant back in his chair, but still looked just over Blair's head, instead of into his eyes.

"Look here, Blair," he said; "I don't know that I have any right to intrude my advice, or even my opinion upon you, but I am, as you know, your friend! I owe you my life! Ever since you picked me out of the Thames that August morning ——"

"Oh, nonsense!" broke in Blair. Any fellow would have done the same. You'd have picked me out if I'd had the cramp, and was going down instead of you."

"Well, we wont talk of it, then," said Austin Ambrose; "but of course I don't forget it. When I look into the glass in the morning, I say to the not particularly handsome gentleman who regards me, 'My friend, but for Lord Blair's strong arm and good wind, you would not be outside the world's crust this morning.' Of course, I can't forget it, and, as I owe you my life, I will continue to become a nuisance to you by offering my advice, and that is: Don't go to the earl and tell him that you are going to make his housekeeper's granddaughter his future niece and the Countess of Ferrers."

CHAPTER XI.

"WHAT do you say?" said Lord Blair, staring at Austin Ambrose with astonishment. "You wouldn't tell the earl?"

"No," said Ambrose, lighting a cigarette and stretching out his legs with comfortable indolence. "I certainly should not."

"But—but why not?" demanded Lord Blair.

"Well," said Ambrose slowly, "you are rather awkwardly placed, you see. I imagined from all you told me that you and the earl do not get on very well together as it is."

"You are right, we don't," admitted Lord Blair shortly.

"Just so. You have led—well, not to put it too plainly—you have been engaged in that branch of agriculture which is called sowing wild oats for a considerable period, and with a great deal of energy. You have had, I believe, rather a large sum of money from the earl?"

"Yes, I have," admitted Blair with a sigh and a frown.

"Not a penny of which he would regret, if you would only oblige him by marrying the woman he has chosen for you."

"Violet Graham?"

"Exactly; Violet Graham," assented Austin Ambrose, knocking the ashes off his cigarette, and keeping his eyes fastened upon it. "And that, I take it, you don't care to do?"

"You know I don't. And Violet doesn't either. Why, you yourself advised me to release her; you know that she doesn't care a brass farthing for me!" exclaimed Blair, pacing to and fro.

"Oh, as to knowing, I don't go so far as that. You asked me for my opinion and I gave it to you. I don't think she cares for you. I don't think Miss Graham is the kind of a woman to care very much for anyone."

"Very well, then, how the deuce could I marry her?" said Blair. "But what is the use of talking about that? Whatever I might have done before I saw Margaret, I certainly couldn't marry any one but her now, not to save a dukedom!"

"All right," assented Austin Ambrose, without permitting the slightest expression of the thrill of satisfaction that ran through him. "I quite understand, and I must say I think you are acting wisely. The man who marries one girl while he loves another is worse than wicked—he is foolish. But all the same the earl remains disappointed and displeased. Do you think, Blair, that his disappointment and displeasure would be lessened if you were to go to him and say, 'I can't marry Violet Cameron, the woman you have chosen for me, and whose money would set me straight; but behold the girl I intend to make my wife, and the future Countess of Ferrers!—she is your housekeeper's niece!'"

"Grand-daughter," said Blair. "And what if she is? I tell you, Austin, Margaret is a lady, from the crown of her head to the soles of her feet!"

"I daresay. I am sure she is, if you say so. You are a very good judge. But, my dear Blair, you can't expect everybody to see her with your eyes, especially an old man who has outlived the age of romance! Miss Margaret, with all her beauty, and grace, and refinement, will be his housekeeper's grand-daughter — and nothing more to him. He will, to put it plainly, be very mad, my dear Blair."

"Well!" said Blair, with the Leyton frown on his handsome face, and the firm look about his lips which when seen by his friends was understood by them to mean that he had made up his mind,—"what then?"

Austin Ambrose raised his eyebrows and looked just over Blair's head with a smile.

"What then? Well, you ought to know better than I whether you can afford to quarrel right out with your uncle, the great earl."

Blair flushed.

"What can he do to me—or her? he asked.

"He can't order you off to instant execution, as he would no doubt like to do," said Ambrose; but he can injure your prospects very materially, my dear Blair. Oh, I know about the title and estate," he went on, as Blair opened his lips. "Those *must* come to you,—lucky beggar that you are! But there is something more beyond those. The earl has a large personal property, a vast sum of money, that he can leave as he pleases——"

"How do you know that?" demanded Blair, with faint surprise.

The slightest flush rose to Austin Ambrose's face.

"Well," he replied, "I only imagine so. Like most people, I know that the earl has not lived up to one half, or a quarter of his income for years. And what an income it is! He must have saved an enormous sum of money——"

"Let him do what he likes with it!" exclaimed Blair bluntly. "I have had more than my share already! Let him leave it to anybody he likes! It is his own."

"Whom is he to leave it to?" said Ambrose. "The home for Lost Dogs?"

"Or sick Cats, I don't care!" said Blair, impetuously.

"That's all very well, and very noble, and all that' my dear Blair," said the cool, quiet voice. "But—pardon me — you haven't only yourself to think about, you know. There is your wife—the fair Margaret——"

"Heaven bless her, my darling!" murmured Blair.

"Just so!" retorted Ambrose, with a cynical smile. "But when you say Heaven bless her you mean that you wish Providence to pour out the good things of this life upon her with a liberal hand, but at the same moment you declare your intention of depriving her and her children of a large sum of money. Rather inconsistent, isn't it?"

Blair stood and looked down at him.

"What a head you have, Austin!" he said. "You ought to have been a lawyer! All this never struk me! I—I—never look forward to the future."

Austin Ambrose shrugged his shoulders.

"If we don't look forward to the future, the future has an awkward knack of looking back upon us!" he said, indolently. "Depend upon it, my friend, that if you let the earl's money slip, you will live to be sorry for it, not for you own sake, I daresay; you don't care about the money, but for your wife and children's!"

"We shouldn't be paupers exactly!" said Blair with a laugh.

"No!" assented Ambrose, and he shot a glance of envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness at the frank, handsome face. "No you will be one of the richest men in England, but all the same——"

"And—and I hate anything like concealment and deceit." Blair broke in impatiently; "especially in connection with Margaret.

Austin Ambrose nodded.

"Well, you asked for my opinion, and you are at liberty to reject it as per usual," he said carelessly. "But though I am not a rich man, I don't mind betting you fifty to one—in farthings—that if you declare your purpose of marrying this young lady to the earl, before many years are over you will come to me and wish to Heaven that you had taken my advice."

Blair bit at his cigar and fidgeted in the chair he had thrown himself into.

"I hate the idea of secrecy, Austin," he said at last; "and yet—but there! ten to one Margaret would refuse a clandestine marriage."

Austin Ambrose did not sneer, but he lowered his lids till they covered the cold gray eyes.

"Yes? I think not. Not if you told her

all that you would lose by an open declaration. Women—forgive me, my dear fellow, but I know a little about them, though you think I don't—women have a better idea of the value of money than we men have. I think Miss Hale will consent to a quiet wedding, when she knows that by so doing she will save several score of thousands to her husband, and to her future children."

There was silence for a moment, then Blair spoke. His fate and Margaret's, and more than theirs, had hung in the balance while he had hesitated.

"I think you're right, Austin," he said, "You always are, I know, and though I hate doing it, I'll take your advice. It—it will be only for a short time.

"Yes, the earl is quite an old man——"

"I didn't mean that," said Blair quickly. "I don't want him to die, Heaven knows! I am not at all anxious to be the Earl of Ferrers. I couldn't make half as fine an earl as he does."

"Just so," said Austin Ambrose. "But I am glad you intend to take my advice."

"Of course, it all depends upon what Margaret says," said Lord Blair gravely. "She may tell me that she—she will not marry me,"—Austin Ambrose smoothed away a smile that was more than half a sneer,—"but if she should say 'Yes,' then I will ask her to marry me quietly, though I hate the idea of secrecy."

There was silence for a moment, then Austin Ambrose said, with a meditative smile,—

"And you are going to turn over a new leaf, eh, Blair? What will the gay world do without you? What will they all say?—Lottie Belvoir, for instance."

Lord Blair colored and frowned.

"What has my marriage to do with Lottie Belvoir?" he said. "I have not seen her for months.'

"Oh, nothing!" assented Ambrose. "But you and she were so very thick, that I expect she will be a little heartbroken, you know."

Lord Blair made an impatient movement.

"I wish to Heaven I had never seen her or any of her kind!" he said remorsefully. "What fools men are, Austin! If we could only live our lives over again—but there, I mean to begin afresh from now. And you will help me, old fellow!" and then he laid his hand on the other man's shoulder. "You have always been the best friend I ever had, and you will help me now!"

"Of course I'll help you; but I don't see what I can do," said Austin Ambrose quietly. "If Miss Hale says 'Yes,' I should beg her to marry me as soon as possible. All you have to do then is to go down to some out-of-the-way place, where there is a church,—and there are churches everywhere,—get the banns put up, or, better still, get a special license. You can be married as snugly as possible, and no one will be any the wiser. Such marriages are managed every day. Who knew that old Fortesque was married? We all thought him a bachelor, and yet he'd had a wife seven years! I'll help you all I can. I can't do less, having given you my advice to keep the thing secret from the earl. Of course, I'd rather not have anything to do with it, but"—he shrugged his shoulders—"you can't refuse anything to a man who saved your life, you know! Have some more wine?"

"No, thanks; no more!" said Lord Blair, jumping up; "I'll take a stroll in the park! I want to think it all over! I am to see her the day after to-morrow, to know if I am to be the happiest or the most miserable of men. Ah, Austin, if you could only see her!"

"I hope I may have that honor soon," he returned. "They say that when a man marries, his wife always hates his most intimate friend. I hope it won't be so with your wife, Blair, I must confess."

"Margaret is incapable of hating anyone," said Blair; "she is an angel, and angels can't hate if they try! Austin, old fellow, cynic and woman hater as you are you, will admit that I have some reason in my madness when you see the girl I love.

"I daresay," said Ambrose. "Well, good-bye! Come and tell me how it all goes."

"Of course," said Blair, getting his hat and stick.

"By the way," said Ambrose indolently; "this is quite a secret at present, isn't it? You have not told anyone but me that you have ever seen this young lady?"

"It is quite secret if you like to call it so," said Blair. "I have told no one."

"I can't help thinging your are right," said Ambrose. "If I were you I would not open my lips to anyone."

Lord Blair nodded, but his face grew overcast.

"I do hate all this mystery, he said; "but I suppose you are right. What I want to do is to take her hand and stand before the world and say, 'Look here, what a prize I have got!'"

"Yes, very nice of you," said Austin Ambrose, "but as we concluded that it is your duty and policy to keep the world in the dark for the present, the best thing you can do is to say nothing to nobody."

"Yes," said Blair; "very well," and he strode out of the room.

Austin Ambrose sat and listened to the firm, decided step as it died away on the stairs, then he rose and paced the room with slow and measured step, his hard, cold face set like stone.

"It's risky!" he muttered at last. "It may fail, and then—— But it will not fail! Blair is easy enough to manage, and the girl—well she is like the rest, I suppose, and, Heaven knows, they are easy enough to deceive! I'll chance it."

He sat down and remained in thought for another quarter of an hour, then he rose and putting a light overcoat over his dress clothes, he took his hat and went out.

It was about the time he usually went down to one of his clubs, but to-night he walked into the direction of the Embankment, and sauntered along beside the river, shining brightly in the moonlight, made his way Chelseawards.

Passing up one of the small streets he reached a short row of houses, quite miniature boxes of residences, called Angelsea Terrace, and knocking at No. 9, inquired if Miss Belvoir were at home.

Before the maidservant could reply, a feminine voice called out through the open door in the narrow passage,—

"Yes, she is! Is that you, Mr. Ambrose? Come in!" and Austin Ambrose, passing through the little passage, which was lined with large photographs of Miss Belvoir in various costumes, entered the room from which the voice proceeded.

The room was a very small one—far too small to permit of that oft-mentioned performance—swinging a cat—and it was rather shabbily, though gaudily, furnished.

The furniture was old and palpably rickety, the carpet was threadbare, but there was a brilliant wall paper, and a pair of gay-colored cushions, an opera cloak, lined with scarlet, laid on one of the chairs, and on the sofa were a hat and a pair of sixteen-button kid gloves.

The owner of the hat, opera cloak, and gloves, sat at the table, "discussing," as the old authors say, a lobster and a bottle or stout.

She was a girl of about two-and-twenty, neither pretty nor plain, but a sharp, intelligent face—the sort of face one sees among the London street boys—and a pair of dark and wide-awake eyes, which were by far her best features.

She wore a light blue dressing gown—rather frayed at the sleeves, by-the-way, and trimmed with a cheap and by no means slightly—dirty lace. But for all its sharpness and vulgarity of surroundings, it was not altogether a bad face.

This was Miss Lottie Belvoir. She was an actress. Not a famous one by any means—only a fifth-rate one at present; but she was waiting for an opportunity to become a first-rate one.

Perhaps the opportunity might come, perhaps it mightn't; meanwhile, Lottie Belvoir was content to work hard and wait.

Some day, perchance, she would "fetch" the town, then she would exchange the grimy back room in Angelsea Terrace for a house at St. John's Wood, the old satin dressing gown for a costume of Worth, and the lobster and stout for a *pate de foie gras* and champagne. Until that happy time arrived, she was perfectly content with minor parts in burlesques at the Frivolity Theatre.

"Oh, it is you, is it?" she said, without rising or stopping in the manipulation of a lobster claw; "I thought I recognized your voice. Who was it said that he never forgot a voice or a face? Some great man. Well, I'm like him. You have come just in time. Have some lobster?"

"No, thank you Lottie," said Austin Ambrose; "I have only just dined."

"Of course, you swells dine later than ever, now, and that's why you can't turn up at the theatre until we have got half through the piece. Well, sit down. Make yourself at home. Take care!" she exclaimed, as he sank into an armchair; "that chair's got a castor off. Here, take this," as she kicked and pushed another one toward him. "Don't put your cigar out; I'm just going to have a cigarette. Have some stout? No? Too heavy, I suppose? Well, here's some whiskey. And how's the world treating you? You look flourishing; but you always do."

"I might return the compliment," he said. "You are still on the Frivolity?"

"Still at the Friv.," she assented, lighting a cigarette and throwing herself not ungracefully on the sofa. "Why don't you drop in some evening and give me a hand? You are too busy at your club with another kind of hand—a hand of cards, I suppose?" she added with charming candor.

He smiled.

"I'll look in some night," he said; "but I suppose they will soon be going on tour."

"Yes, in another fortnight," she said, with a yawn, "and precious glad I shall be. London's getting too warm even for this child."

"And yet I want you to stay in London," he said quietly.

She looked across at him and blew out a ring of smoke scientifically.

"You do, do you? What for? Are you going to take a theatre and engage me as leading lady?"

"Do I look like it?" he retorted with a smile.

"Well, not much," she said, surveying him critically. "People might take you for good many things, Mr. Ambrose, but they wouldn't take you for a fool, or if they did they would be taken in."

"Thanks, Lottie," he said. "That is something like a compliment.'

"No, I don't think you are such an idiot as to take a theatre," she said. "but what do you want me to stay in London for?"

"To assist me in a little business I'm engaged in," he said.

She regarded him with sharp scrutiny as she leant back and smoked her cigarette.

"You seem rather shy of mentioning it and coming to the point," she said dryly; "is it anything very bad?"

"Oh, no, something quite in your line. You know, Lottie, I always said you would turn out a great actress."

"You have said so a dozen of times," she said, "but whether you meant it——"

"I am quite serious, I assure you," he responded, "and in proof of my sincerity I am going to ask you to play a very difficult part."

"Oh, you've written a play!" she said coolly; "well that's more in your line. And when are you going to produce it? And I'm to have a big part, am I, or is it a little one as usual? The authors always try and persuade you when they are giving you a part with about five lines in it, that it's the most important in the cast."

"I haven't written a play, and yet I have, so to speak," he said. "And you have the best part, far and away, Lottie. By the way, I have a piece of news for you. Lord Blair is going to be married!"

He burst it upon her purposely to see how she would like it, and for a moment Lottie turned crimson and then white, and her eyes blazed; then the actress asserted herself over the mere woman, and taking up another cigarette she lit it before she gave vent to a cool——

"Oh, really!"

But Austin Ambrose had seen the deep red and the quick flash of the eyes and was not taken in by the nonchalant "Oh, really!"

"Yes," he said; but it is a profound secret at present."

"And so you want me to tell everybody! I understand."

"No," he said "I do not want you to tell anyone this time. I want it to be really kept quiet. You will see why directly."

"And the happy young lady is Miss Violet Graham, I suppose?" said Lottie after a moment's pause. "What a funny thing it is that Fortune showers all her gifts on some persons and bestows only slaps on the face on others. Now, there's Miss Graham, the richest woman in England, and fortune goes and gives her the nicest and handsomest young man for a husband, while I, poor Lottie Belvoir, have to struggle and struggle, and work like a slave, and all I get is some small part in a Frivolity burlesque. It *is* funny, isn't it.

"Very funny," assented Austin Ambrose; "but you are a little wrong in your guess. It is not Miss Graham."

"Not Miss Graham? Who then?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A CHEAP TELEPHONE.—To make a serviceable telephone from one house to another only requires enough wire and two cigar boxes. First select your boxes, and make a hole half an inch in diameter in the centre of the bottom of each, and then place one in each of the houses you wish to connect; then get five pounds of common iron stovepipe wire, make a loop in one and put it through the hole in your cigar box and fasten it with a nail; then draw it tight to the other box, supporting it when necessary with a stout cord. You can easily run your line into the house by boring through the glass. Support your boxes with slats nailed across the window, and your telephone is complete.

Bric-a-Brac.

AN INGENIOUS INSECT.—The trap-door spider found in the various parts of Europe, obtained its popular name from the ingenious nest which it constructs. It makes a hole in the ground and lines it with moss and silk; when this has been completed it closes the little pit with an accurately-fitting lid that turns on a hinge of silk. The spider retires into this den when threatened with an attack, and is said to hang on to the trap-door when an attempt is made to raise it. In this retreat it rests during the day, leaving it at night in search of food. to gain further safety it sometimes forms a chamber leading off from the pit, and conceals this recess with a kind of a silk curtain.

THE COON AND THE OYSTER.—Sometimes, as you are aware the biter gets bit. One night an old racoon went to catch oysters at Cat Island, near New Orleans. Spying a big one with its shell open, the coon crawled up to it and put in his paw to scoop up the meat. No sooner had he done this than the shell came to with a snap, and the would-be captor was caught. In spite of all his efforts he could neither remove the oyster from the mud, nor get his paw from its clutches. Presently the tide turned, and the coon soon found the water about his feet. He now had to choose between death by drowning and the loss of a foot; so without more ado he actually gnawed his paw off and limped away on three legs. He won't go oyster-fishing again in a hurry, that coon won't.

THE MOON.—Australian natives believe the moon to be a mischievous being, who went about the world doing evil. One day he swallowed the eagle god. The wives of the eagle came up and the moon asked them where he could find a well. They showed him one and he stooped over to drink, they hit him on the head and out flew the eagle. In Greenland the sun and the moon is said to be brother and sister. Malina was teased by her brother Anninga, and she flew up in the air and became the sun, and her brother, who could not fly so high, became the moon. When he is tired and hungry in his last quarter, he leaves his house, on a sledge harnessed to four dogs and hunts for several days. On his return he eats so much that he grows into a full moon.

THE SWORD HUNTERS.—In the south of Kassala in Africa, there dwells a tribe of Arabs, who are often called "the sword hunters" in consequence of their having made a special study of the chase of "great game" by means of the sword. They are among the most skilful riders of the world. In hunting the elephant one of their band rides ahead of the big animal, to turn its attention away from his mates, one of whom, at the proper moment, leaps from his horse and gives the elephant a severe cut behind his knee with his sharp sword, two blows of which usually disables the poor brute. In hunting the hippopotamus they use harpoons and lances instead of the sword. They are not afraid to attack the lion and rhinoceros as well as the other creatures mentioned.

CUTTING THE GORDIAN KNOT.—To cut the Gordian knot means to find the way out of a very great difficulty. The phrase rose in this wise, the story of course being purely fable. While Gordius, a Phrygian pheasant, was ploughing his field, an eagle settled on his yoke, and stayed there till the day's work was done. This was wonderful, and on inquiring of the prophetess what it all meant, she advised him to offer up sacrifice to Jupiter. He did so, and married the prophetess out of gratitude. Years afterwards, troubles arose in Phyrgia, and Gordius sent his son Midas to ask the famous oracle at Delphi about choosing a new king. The answer was that a new king should come to them riding on a car, and that he would bring peace. Oddly enough, Gordius himself arrived in this very fashion, and he was accordingly made king. He thereupon dedicated his car to Jupiter and fastened his team of oxen to a beam in the citadel of Gordium but he tied the knot so cleverly that no one could undo it. Alexander the Great visiting the town, and hearing that an oracle had declared that whoever could unloosen the knot would become ruler of Asia, said, "Well, then, I will do it thus," and he cut the knot in two with his sword.

JOHN POTTS, with a small J and a large P, writes to a South Missouri editor to stop his paper for reasons which he thus explains: "I hev pade to much already and yu don't giv us enny funny eyetems yu are awl the time riting up pollyticks en wot yu no abot a pollytick woodent fil a flees' year."

ONE DAY.

BY F. W.

Out in the country the bells were ringing,
Out in the fields was a child at play,
And up to heaven a lark went singing,
Blithe and free on that morn in May.

And the child looked up as she heard the singing,
Watching the lark as it soared away;
"O sweet lark, tell me, heavenward winging,
Shall I go also to heaven one day?"

Deep in the shade of a mighty city,
Toiled a woman for daily bread,
Only a lark to see her and pity,
Singing all day in a cage o'erhead.

And there they dwelt in the gloom together
Prisoned and pent in the narrow street,
But the bird still sang of the golden weather,
And the woman dreamed of her childhood sweet.

Still in her dreams the bells were ringing,
Still a child in the fields was she,
And she opened the cage as the lark was singing,
Kissed him gently and set him free.

And up and on as the lark went singing,
Down came a voice that seemed to say:
"Even as the lark is heavenward winging,
Thou shalt go also to heaven one day!"

For Love or Duty.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HIS MONEY AND HIS LOVE," "DOLLY'S DISAPPOINTMENT," "KING OR PRINCE?" ETC., ETC."

CHAPTER IV.

AMID the laughter caused by this speech, Lovelace stoops and brushes with his black moustache the cheek of the small white-frocked child pointed out to him, and then recrosses the room with grave and unmoved dignity.

"What a bear!" whispers Edith to Randal Blakey behind her fan; but the rest of the girls like him all the better for his general indifference to women's charms, and for the haughty inflexibility which rouses their fear as well as their admiration.

Between ten and eleven the children are sent off—some to their neighboring homes, the rest to bed, and then their elders are at liberty to amuse themselves in their own way.

Mr. Howard St. John, Aubrey's father, begs his niece Edith to give them a song, but she excuses herself, pleading a bad cold.

Juliet, not being troubled with self-consciousness, is very ready to comply when she is asked, and her clear ringing voice gives full effect to "Cherry Ripe."

On Aubrey's left sits little Lucy Burnet, the eldest daughter of Colonel St. John's only sister, who looks up to her tall cousin Aubrey with all the fervent adoration of seventeen, and who would give her pretty little ears for one of the longing glances which he bestows so lavishly upon Juliet.

Perhaps it is just as well that kind-hearted Aubrey is utterly unaware of Lucy's silent worship, or, in his cousinly warmth and pity for the little thing, he might—with the best of intentions—give her good cause to break her heart about him.

Then Randal Blakey gives them "La donna e mobile," and very well he sings it; the soft Italian barcarole is admirably suited to his sweet voice, and his sentimental blue eyes are a good aid to the general effect. After that comes Burnet St. John, with his well-trained barytone voice.

His thoughts are all for Cecily as he sings it, and his half-smiling eyes frequently turn in her direction; but Juliet looks involuntarily at Lovelace, standing, dark and stern, by Edith's chair.

"'Fierceness owns thy spell,'" she repeats to herself.

Dare she balk the "vulture" of his prey? But he is under no spell, whether of love or anything else.

His face is the face of a man who stands alone in the world, and who is perfectly satisfied with his position.

And so the merry Christmas-time passes quickly away, and Aubrey St. John returns to Oaklands even heavier of heart than he left it, while Juliet will not think of the future, but concerns herself only with the present, helping Edith, and supporting her unfailing courage.

* * * * *

The tenth of March is a cold blustering day, with a bright blue sky and a bitter east wind.

It is Edith's and Juliet's wedding-day, for the two cousins are to be married at the same time, by their own especial desire.

Colonel St. John is very well pleased with this arrangement; he knows that his daughter and his niece are the two prettiest girls in the county, and the double wedding will make a very agreeable sensation.

He would like to put Aubrey St. John in the place of Randal Blakey, but, since that cannot be, he resigns himself to the inevitable with a fairly good grace, considering his warmth of temper, and the something like contempt which he entertains for his pink-cheeked nephew-elect.

All the St. Johns are at Compton Cheney who can possibly manage to leave their homes, as well as the relatives of young Blakey.

Sir Evelyn has no one that he desires to ask, and he selects Aubrey St. John for his best man; and, when the young fellow pleads an urgent journey to Paris as an excuse for his absence, his choice falls upon his cousin Burnet, and there the matter ends, so far as he is concerned.

Randal Blakey is half wild with excitement, but his fellow-bridegroom takes things very coolly, and Juliet—self-reproachful, and yet unwavering in her determination—searches in vain for any sign of warmth in his immovable dark face, nor does she detect any tone of affection in his voice when addressing Edith, who is fairly complaisant, considering how distasteful this match is to her.

The brides are dressed exactly alike in the orthodox white satin and wreaths of orange-blossom, while eight bridesmaids, of whom Cecily St. John and Lucy Burnet are the chief, follow in their train, robed in palest pink silk.

"How thick your veil is!" remarks Cecily to Edith, as she throws it over her beautiful cousin's fair head, while in the next room Lucy performs the same kind office for Juliet. "Why, I can scarcely see you through it, Edith!"

"We got them thick on purpose," answers the bride-elect, beginning to pull on her gloves. "We thought we should be frozen this bitter March weather; and now, if we are, people won't be able to see our blue noses."

"No, they won't," laughs Cecily. "Why didn't you wait until the summer, if you are so afraid of not looking well?"

"Oh, father and Sir Evelyn were both in such a hurry, and I didn't think it mattered! Mind you put that pin in well to the left, Cecily."

Ten minutes later the bridesmaids are on their way to the church, behind the prancing white horses with their satin favors, and soon after the brides themselves follow in the same carriage, together with Colonel St. John, who is to give them both away.

His brother Howard had suggested that Juliet should go with him in another carriage, to avoid crushing the delicate bridal-dresses; but neither of the girls would hear of it, they protested that they would go together to their doom, as Juliet puts it, with an excited laugh.

She is scarcely like herself to-day, though she laughs and chatters more than usual; and Edith too seems less apathetic than usual, and sometimes laughs, and sometimes cries, with hysterical excitement.

Every one declares that the two girls look beautiful as they sweep up the aisle on either side of Colonel St. John, whose stern face relaxes considerably as he looks from one drooping golden head to the other.

Sir Evelyn Lovelace advances on the right, to receive his kinsman's daughter, while Randal Blakey, on the left, receives the lesser gift of the niece.

The bridesmaids arrange themselves behind, Burnet St. John stands at Lovelace's elbow, while Randal Blakey is supported by his brother-in-law, Ernest Fortescue, and the service commences.

Not much of the brides' faces can be seen under their veils, besides which their backs are turned to the congregation; but those who do catch a glimpse of them say that they are both deathly pale throughout the ceremony.

Their responses are made in very low and trembling tones, and they are evidently suffering from nervousness, but nobody finds fault with them for that.

Captain Blakey is nearly as agitated as they are; his small white fingers shake so that he can hardly put on the ring.

The least affected of the entire wedding-party is Sir Evelyn Lovelace.

He stands before the altar as cool and composed as though he were looking on at some one else's wedding.

He speaks when he is required, without making any blunders, in a deep unsoftened voice which may be heard all over the church, and now and then he stares unconcernedly up at the stained-glass window over the altar.

All is over at last, and the party return home—each bride and bridegroom in a separate carriage this time.

There is a grand breakfast at Compton Cheney, fixed for one o'clock to suit the time of the trains.

The respective couples are to start within ten minutes of each other, though from different stations—Sir Evelyn and Lady Lovelace being bound to their other estate in Yorkshire, Captain and Mrs. Blakey for Folkestone, en route for Paris.

After the breakfast, the brides, followed by their attendant satellites, leave the table to prepare for their respective journeys. They still dress alike, in costumes of dark-green velvet trimmed with silver fox.

"What a pity to put on that ugly thing!" remonstrates Cecily, as Edith requests her to tie the ends of the gray gauze veil which she has arranged over her face. "It spoils you altogether, Edie; I declare your own husband wouldn't know you!"

"How silly you are, Cecily!" she answers, almost pettishly. "You know I always wear gauze veils while these bitter winds are blowing."

"I only thought that on this day you would like to look your best," returns Cecily apologetically.

"I shouldn't look my best by the time we were in the train; my nose would be red and my lips blue—a pretty bride I should be!" laughs Edith, rather constrainedly.

"I never saw you with your hair curled in front before," goes on Cecily, after a pause. "It makes you look more like Juliet than you generally do."

"Do you think so? But it suits me, I fancy. Perhaps I shall always wear it curled—I shall see."

The door opens at this moment, and Juliet looks in, with a gauze veil similar to Edith's put back over her hat.

"Are you ready, Edie?" she asks, a little nervously. "I thought I would like to say good-bye to you here, darling, before we go downstairs. We have been like sisters all our lives, and now——"

Her voice breaks, and sudden tears quench the unnatural brightness of her eyes.

Cecily kisses both her cousins, and goes out of the room, drawing the other girls with her.

The two brides soon appear and go downstairs together, followed by their bevy of bridesmaids.

Colonel St. John takes a very different view of the despised veils, drawn closely down, crossed behind, and then brought to the front and tied round their necks like scarves.

"A very sensible thing to do," he says. "This east wind goes to one's very bones, and Edith there always gets the toothache if she goes out in it. So you mean to be alike to the last, do you?" he continues, addressing them both. "Well, I'm sure I have no objection, I am pleased to see such good feeling between you; but, really, girls, it is rather confusing, I'm not sure which is which at this very moment, and I don't believe your husbands can tell any more than myself. They will have to take care that they don't each get hold of the wrong wife!"

"Just what I said!" exclaims Cecily triumphantly.

"But we can see if we can't be seen," observes Juliet; "and we shouldn't be likely to take the wrong husbands—should we, Edie?"

"Oh, dear, no!" answers the other, laughing and shivering at the same moment.

Everybody laughs at this idea, and then, the time being up, farewells are hastily exchanged, and the ladies, heedless of the keen breath of March which sweeps in at the hall door, cluster on the steps to throw old shoes after the two carriages rapidly departing in opposite directions, and it is not until they are quite out of sight that the company returns to the shelter of the house.

The drive to Compton station, to which Lovelace and his bride are bound, is not very long—it occupies little more than twenty minutes—which time is spent by the bridegroom in looking absently out of the window, occasionally addressing some common-place remark to his bride, which she for the most part answers in monosyllables.

He is not at all surprised thereat, being well used to Edith's apathy when in his presence, and indeed he regards it as rather a relief, as he has not much to say to her at any time.

When they get to the station the train is in, and they have to hasten to their seats, while Timothy sees to the luggage.

In another minute they glide away, leaving Timothy touching his hat upon the platform.

She turns and looks at her husband then, and he looks at her, but can see nothing except the faint outline of cheek and brow through the thick veil.

There is a silence which lasts until it grows awkward, but she does not attempt to break it; she has turned away her face now, and is looking out of the farther window. It is Lovelace who speaks first—not without hesitation, unusual though it is with him.

"Edith," he said, changing his seat opposite to her to the one beside her, "I fear I am rather old and grave for you, but I mean to make you a good husband. You must put up with me, and, when I offend you by my bearishness—for I am not much used to ladies' society—you must tell me." He pauses waiting for her to speak.

"Yes," she murmurs, very softly.

"I hope you will be happy as my wife," he continues gravely. "I intend to do all in my power to make you so."

"Thank you," she murmurs again.

"Do you think you can be happy, Edith? Your father had more to do with the arrangement of this marriage than yourself, I know, but he did not leave your welfare out of the question. I think he would not have given his only daughter to any save one whom he could trust to take care of her. Will you try to be happy with me, Edith?" he repeats, as she maintains silence.

"No!" answers a ringing voice, the tones of which make him start back in astonishment. "Edith could never be happy with you; she has gone with the man who loves her!"

And, raising her veil, she discloses, not Edith's calm loveliness, but the audacious beauty of her cousin Juliet, her pretty lips parting in triumphant laughter as she looks at her husband and dupe!

* * * * * *

"Oh, Randal dearest," half sobs Edith, just at that moment, "what a day it has been! Even now I dare hardly believe we are safe at last."

"My darling, I never was in such an awful state in my life! That little Juliet's a jewel, and no mistake. But for her I must have broken down a hundred times. I thought every minute you were going to faint; and altogether I was on the verge of madness."

"What should we have done if we had been found out?" she ejaculates, heaving a long sigh of relief.

"Never mind; we won't think of that now," he answers fondly. "We've got all our happiness before us, and have left all our troubles behind. Poor little Jul I hope she will get off pretty well."

And they forgot all else save themselves and each other.

CHAPTER V.

THERE is a long silence after the exclamation which bursts from Lovelace's lips as the truth dawns upon him; he looks sternly into Juliet's flushed face, and she gazes back into his almost threatening dark eyes unflinchingly, though, now that the great strain is over, she feels her strength giving way.

"May I ask the meaning of this?" he says at last, his eyes still fixed upon her face.

"The meaning of it is that Edith is Randal Blakey's wife instead of yours," she answers bravely.

"And that you have kindly undertaken to fill the position destined for her? I feel highly honored."

He bows mockingly.

"Don't imagine that I married you because I liked you in the least, for I don't—I hate you as much as Edith does," she replies bluntly. "I did it only for her sake, because she was so weak, and could not stand up for herself against you and uncle Phil. She begged me to help her out of this marriage that she dreaded so much, and I determined I would find a way. I was not going to let her be sacrificed to you!"

"You preferred to sacrifice yourself? You are most generous, Miss St. John—I beg pardon—Lady Lovelace. I assure you I feel your unselfishness deeply."

Juliet nearly breaks down. She was prepared for his bitterest wrath, his hottest indignation, but this stinging sarcasm was not included in her calculations, and it proves almost too much for her.

Fortunate however her wounded pride comes to her aid, and she answers him with spirit.

"I believe you think that I am in love with you, Sir Evelyn, or with Tenham, I do not know which; but my future conduct shall show you that you are very much mistaken in either supposition."

"Really! May I ask what course you intend to pursue in order to disabuse me of any such ideas?"

"I intend to get out at the next station to begin with—the rest will follow in due order."

"That you will not!" he answers sharply. "I shall not allow you to get out until we arrive at our destination," he adds, with quiet resolution.

"But—you do not want to go to Yorkshire with me?" she falters. "I am not your wife, you know."

"Are you not? Whom did I marry this morning? On whose finger did I put that wedding-ring?"

"On mine—but you did not mean to marry me any more than I meant to marry you, so the marriage won't stand, of course."

"We will see about that. In the meantime I shall feel very much obliged if you will tell me your real object in taking me for your husband, since you assure me that that object was not myself or my possessions."

"I have told you already," she says, almost crying, "that it was to save Edith. Indeed, Sir Evelyn, I didn't marry you the least bit for yourself, I never cared for you, I never liked you, you must know I never did!" she concludes imploringly, as though she might be courting his love rather than his hatred.

"I certainly was not without proofs of your disfavor," he answers calmly; "but, if all this was planned merely to save your cousin from me, and to help her to marry another man, I must be allowed to say that it was most absurd and unnecessary. There were a dozen other much easier ways of getting her off with Blakey."

"Yes; but Edith is so weak and delicate—she would never have had the courage to carry anything out by herself—and Randal was nervous as well; besides, we did not know how to escape uncle Phil's vigilance; and—and——"

"Pray let me hear it all while we are about it!" he says, as she pauses.

"Well then," she returns, with a sudden daring smile in the midst of her tears, "I was so angry with you for plotting with uncle to join the estates, and treating Edith as though she were a horse or a dog, to be included in the 'movable property,' that I was glad of the opportunity to take revenge on you by——"

"By tricking me as surely never man was tricked before! Well, young lady, I congratulate you upon your skilful generalship. Your strength of mind is a thing to be wondered at—and feared."

"It is not Edith's fault—nor Randal's," she goes on falteringly. "They would neither of them have thought of such a thing. You must blame me, and me only, for all that has happened."

"I have no intention of blaming any one else. But kindly answer me a few questions, for I must confess I am quite at a loss to know who returned with me from church, who sat by my side at breakfast, and so on."

"I will tell you all about it," she says, nerving herself for the relation of the story; "and then, I think, you will let me go."

"First of all—where would you go?"

"To uncle Philip, of course."

"Do you think he would receive you after your double fraud?"

"If he refused I could go to uncle Howard's, or anywhere; I have plenty of money of my own to live on. But I think uncle Phil would soon have me back."

"I daresay he would. He's an old fool about some things. And so am I—to be taken in by a bit of a girl like you! But go on."

"We wore those thick wedding-veils on purpose," she begins rather timidly, "and kept our heads down very low; and, as we are really not unlike, we had a good hope that we might pass for each other pretty well. When we got out of the carriage at the church we went purposely on the wrong sides of uncle Philip. Edith was to take his right arm, and I his left; but we changed about without his knowledge, and when we came up the aisle you took me from him instead of Edith, who went to Randal. Then, when we went into the vestry, we were separated by all the kissing and congratulations and fuss, and after that Edith went out with you to one carriage, and Randal and I followed in the next, and so we continued during the breakfast, or we should have been found out fifty times over. When we went upstairs to dress I was ready first, and I went into Edith's room and asked if I might say good-bye to her there. Of course all the other girls went away, knowing how like sisters we were, and when we came out we had changed places again, she was Juliet, and I was Edith. That was not really necessary—we did it for a test, to see if we should be discovered through our veils before we ventured downstairs. Then, when we were starting, Edith went down the steps leaning on Randal's arm, and I on yours—and that is all."

"All! And enough, I should think! Upon my word you are a clever girl—and a plucky one, too!"

He looks at her as he says this with an indefinable expression in his dark eyes, and Juliet quails under his glance, in which she fails to read any admiration of her daring or any sympathy with her generous love for her beautiful cousin.

"You will let me go?" she says at last. "We are not really married, and I am sure you don't want me for your wife any more than I want you for my husband."

"I cannot let you go—it is out of my power. You are my wife, whether you like it or not."

"But indeed I cannot be," she says, with a frightened, imploring look into his grave face. "I signed the register falsely, as Randal's wife. Our marriage cannot be binding."

"Well, then, what do you say to the other couple? Are they not legally and properly married?"

"Oh, yes—because they meant to marry each other! Randal knew all about it from the beginning, and pretended to be engaged to me," she says, half-laughing in the midst of her distress.

"Yes—he actually asked the Colonel for you—the young dog!" returns Lovelace savagely.

"Yes—but, as he told me afterwards," she says, with a burst of real merriment, "if he asked for me he didn't say he would have me!"

Lovelace mutters something under his breath, and looks out of the window.

"I can't think how your cousin could throw herself away upon such a young fool!" he says, after a minute.

"You think I showed better taste," she rejoins, her old wicked spirit beginning to gain an ascendency over her fears.

"No. You say you hate me, and married me only to save your cousin."

"Yes; that is the truth," she answers, without looking at him, or she might wonder at the sparkle in his bold eyes. "And, now that you know the whole of the story, and that it is all my fault, and no one else's, you will let me go back to uncle Philip, will you not? If you want to punish me, it is the best thing you can do. He will be terribly angry with me, and I shall care for his anger more than I should ever——"

She stops, half in surprise at finding where her straightforward words are leading her.

"More than you would ever care for mine—you were going to say. Well, I have met a good many people in my time, and very queer characters some of them were to deal with, but I don't think I ever came across such an utterly incorrigible young lady in my life."

"I am sorry if I have offended you"—humbly. "I didn't mean to say that—it came without thinking. And, if you care for Edith at all, I am sorry for you as well as for uncle; though I am not sorry for what I did," she adds resolutely. "Edith was the first to be considered, and I thought of her—even before uncle Phil."

"And even before yourself?"

"It didn't matter about that. Our marriage is not a real marriage."

"But I beg to assure you that it is. If you go upon the ground that the register was falsely signed, then your cousin and Blakey cannot be legally married either."

"Oh, yes, they are, because they meant to be married! Besides, Randal has a special license in his pocket, and they are to be married over again directly they reach Folkestone, to make quite sure of each other."

"The young rascal! He is shrewd enough on some points, it would seem. But you would not agree to marry me over again, I suppose?"

"No!"

He smiles slightly.

"It is not necessary. Blakey and your cousin, as well as you and I, are as legally married as any couples in England; You are all three liable—and I suppose myself also—to a penalty for signing the register falsely—that is all."

"But I am not really your wife; oh, surely not! I did it only for Edith's sake, and a little bit for fun."

"You see that such fun has sometimes a serious ending," he rejoins drily.

"But the law, which has joined us, can set us free, can it not," she asks eagerly.

"I doubt it. There are no grounds to go upon. We could not even plead 'incompatibility of temper,'" he replies, his lips relaxing into a momentary smile. "Besides which," he resumes with dignity, "I have no intention of dragging your uncle's name and my own through a court of law. I have too much respect for them both. You have made yourself my wife—as my wife you must continue until it please Providence to free us from one another by death."

It is a cruel sentence—cruelly pronounced.

Juliet, as she wipes away the bitter tears which scald her cheeks, feels that she would give ten years of her life to undo that morning's work—to free this man from the burden which he seems to find so intolerable, and which she had never dreamed that she was laying upon him.

"Couldn't there be a mutual agreement to separate, or—or—anything?" she sobs, while the train whirls onward towards the north, and the hills begin to grow bleak, and the fields few and far between.

"No; not without creating an injurious and unnecessary scandal. Your own hands have forged your chains, now you must learn to bear them."

He speaks not unkindly, but still very sternly.

"I am very sorry," she sobs. "I never meant to force myself on to you, I thought that when you found it out you would be dreadfully angry, and I even fancied sometimes that you might kill me, but if you didn't I thought you would only be too glad to get rid of me, and that I should go back to uncle Phil, and, when he had been as angry as ever he could be, that it would be all right, and that you would marry some one else after awhile—and I too, perhaps."

"But you see now that is impossible for either of us, don't you?"

"I am very sorry," she reiterates penitently.

There is silence for a while. Juliet leans back in her corner quietly crying, the gauze veil that has done such service lying torn and trampled upon the floor of the compartment, while Lovelace returns to his absent-minded staring out of the window.

"It is useless lamenting now the thing is done," he says presently. "Let us, instead, try to be as good friends as we can, though we can be nothing more. Let my behavior to you, and yours to me, be in public as though we were on good terms as husband and wife, while in private we need not interfere with each other more than we can help. I have my own pursuits, and I know you have yours, for I have always found you busy. I shall see that you want for nothing, and in any difficulty you can always come to me."

"You are very good," she falters. "I did not think——"

"You did not think that I could be anything but an unmitigated brute" he finishes, with a slight smile. "Well, do you agree to these terms?"

"Couldn't I go back to uncle Phil, anyhow?"

"No, you could not," he answers decidedly. "You are just as much Lady Lovelace as my father's wife was before you, and it is only right and seemly that you should live under your husband's roof."

"Couldn't I go to France—or some place even farther away, where nobody would know me, and live alone there under an assumed name?"

"No."

"Then, if I really can't I agree to what you said, and—and I am very grateful to you for not—not——"

"For not killing you, I suppose? Well, that wouldn't mend matters."

She puts her hand into the one held out to her, and his broad palm closes over the little fingers with a very firm pressure, which seems to her the seal of their mutual bondage.

"But what will you say to uncle Phil, and everybody?" she asks, after an interval of thoughtful silence.

"I must think about that, and must make some arrangements so as to cause us as little surprise as possible on our return. I think he, at any rate, will have to know the truth. About the rest of the family I must have time for consideration; but there will be plenty of opportunity for that during our stay in Yorkshire."

CHAPTER VI.

JULIET is left a good deal to herself during their month's sojourn in the north; but she does not mind that in her intense wonder and thankfulness at having got off so well.

Little is said between them on any subject, and nothing on that which is nearest her heart, until she and Lovelace are flying southwards again in the train.

"I have been thinking about what is best to be done, Juliet," he begins. "Your uncle knows all by this time; I wrote to him last night, in order that the news might reach him this morning, and prepare him to see his niece instead of his daughter."

"And what about the others?" she asks hesitatingly.

"We must allow them to think that not only you three were a party to the deception, but I also. You understand me? They must be allowed to think that we all combined to trick the Colonel, and when they have taken in that fully they will make up the rest for themselves."

"But—but we can't pretend to be like Randal and Edith. They will be as ridiculous as sweethearts, I expect."

"No; that is not necessary. You and I are very different people from Captain and Mrs. Blakey. I don't think any one would expect much in the sentimental line from me"—with a half-sneer—"and you have only to talk and laugh as you always used to do, and to appear well satisfied with yourself and position, and all of them will think we are the happiest couple in the world. A little audacity, Juliet, such as you seem to possess in abundance, will go a great way;" he concludes.

Juliet is wounded almost to tears at this ending to a speech otherwise full of kind consideration.

Those stinging words from his bitter tongue keep her in continual fear of him; and, though she frequently turns upon him with a spirit equal to his own, her untamed lawlessness is already beginning to give way beneath his iron rule.

She hardly knows what happens when she finds herself upon the platform of Compton railway-station, so confused and frightened is she, in spite of Lovelace's assurances; but presently she feels a moustache pressed to her lips, and hears a familiar gruff voice uttering words which fill her with astonishment and delight.

"Juliet, my girl; my brave, noble girl! Give your old uncle a kiss, and never fear; he is not going to be angry with you"—with a significant emphasis on the last word. "Lovelace, you ought to congratulate yourself on having won such a jewel, whether by hook or by crook!"

Then uncle Phil bustles them into a carriage that is waiting, and takes the seat opposite to them.

"Mitchell will look after your maid," he continues to Juliet, "and I suppose she knows all about the luggage?"

"Oh, yes, uncle!" Juliet answers.

"I suppose you did not expect a public welcome?" Colonel St. John says to Lovelace, while Juliet sits bewildered in her corner. "I thought, in the circumstances, you will prefer a private reception only, and so no one in the place is aware of your return to-night except the Tenham servants and our own."

"You are quite right in your supposition—I am obliged to you," returns Lovelace curtly.

A new pain is thrust upon Juliet as she enters the hall, and sees the curious looks of the assembled servants.

Her eyes fill with tears at Lovelace's few words of forced welcome, and she is truly glad when she finds herself in her room with only her maid, though she would fain have dispensed with her also, and poured out her misery in a flood of tears.

But, that being impossible, she commences dressing for dinner in good earnest, and presently her old spirits come back, and she walks downstairs with smiling lips, rosy cheeks, and fearless blue eyes.

"You look well, child," says her uncle, as she enters the drawing-room. "Now tell me how you dared play me such a trick, if you please"—trying to look very fierce, and failing lamentably in the attempt.

"Oh," she laughs, "it was just because there was nothing else I dared do, uncle Phil! If I had tried any other way you would have been sure to find me out."

"And suppose I had found you out as it was—oh, Lady Lovelace!"

"I won't suppose it, because you didn't."

"Oh, you're a sly fox—quite too much for an old man like me!"

"But you know, uncle," she says, putting one soft hand upon each of his arms, "I was very sorry all the time that I had to deceive you—I would not have done it for the sake of any one in the world except Edith."

"Oh, I daresay!"

"You know it, uncle. You know I love you and Edith better than any one else in the world. Dear uncle, you have been so kind and good as to forgive me—you will forgive her also, will you not—and Randal? They would never have done it but for me—it was all my fault."

"A most daring ringleader!" he comments, putting his hand under her chin and raising her face. "A most dangerous character, truly! But I think I could forgive any one who showed half your pluck and spirit of enterprise, Juliet."

"Then you forgive them?"

"Not so fast. They have acted but a cowardly part——"

"No, uncle."

"But I say they have, mim."

"I may write to Edith?"

"Twice a day if you like."

"And say that you forgive them, and will be pleased to see them at Compton?"

"I don't say that."

"But you will—when I have talked to you a little longer."

"What is it to you whether I forgive them or not?"

"Everything in the world, uncle. Why should they be punished for my sins? Please don't forgive me, uncle, unless you forgive Edith too."

"How dare you keep on bothering so?" he demands, pushing her away from him a little, but secretly well pleased at her championship of his daughter, of whose beauty he is extremely proud, and for whom he still has a paternal affection, in spite of the weakness and foibles which are so trying to his impatient spirit.

"I always did bother for anything I wanted, didn't I?"

"You always were the most contumacious young person that ever I had to deal with!"

"Give me my way in this, then, uncle, and I'll never trouble you any more, I promise. I will be the most obedient, docile——"

"Then I will have nothing to do with you! I don't want my madcap girl turned into a milksop. There, do as you like, then"—as she puts her arms round his bronzed neck—an act of affection which few besides herself would dare venture upon—"I suppose I must give in to you sooner or later, so it may as well be sooner. But, now—mind you make Lovelace a good wife—he deserves it, I can tell you—and—there, get along with you, child—here's your husband."

She does not release him, however, until she has kissed both weather-beaten cheeks twice over, and then she turns, to face Sir Evelyn Lovelace, who is standing in the doorway, looking on very gravely and even sternly at the tableau.

But he smiles slightly when his eyes meet hers.

"So it is all square between you and the Colonel," he says to her, later on in the evening, when the fiery old gentleman has taken his departure.

"Yes; I think we are better friends than ever. Uncle is very good—and kinder than I thought he could be."

"You thought us such a couple of stony-hearted brutes."

"But I was very much mistaken. Do you know I am going to write to Edith to-morrow, and tell her that uncle will forgive them, and that they may come to Compton when they return home?"

"Yes; he told me that after dinner."

"I wish I had written to Edith before; but I could not make up my mind what to do."

"What are you going to say to her—about yourself?"

"I don't know. I have not thought about it."

"Then it is time you did. Do not tell her the real facts of the case, Juliet—it would be most unwise."

"What shall I tell her, then? I will do as you wish," she answers, feeling that he merits this much for his forbearance towards her.

"Tell her that her father and I were not so displeased at the fraud practiced upon us as you had anticipated, and that you and I have made up our minds to take the consequences cheerfully, and pull together as husband and wife should. If she has any woman's wit, she will leap at once to the desirable conclusion that you and I have fallen in love."

"Very well," she answers, rather unwillingly.

And so it is settled, and the next day Juliet writes to Edith—her fingers rebelling against the task set them—and tells her just what Lovelace has desired her to tell concerning themselves, though all the while she longs to pour out the whole story into her cousin's ear.

The other part of the letter, containing the news of the Colonel's forgiveness, is easily and gladly written, and half in pain, half in pleasure, she sees her letter carried to the post.

Three days later, as she sits alone in the morning-room at Tenham, a servant comes from Compton with a note from her uncle, desiring the company of herself and Sir Evelyn at dinner that evening, as Edith and her husband have arrived, and intend to stay at least one night.

Lovelace has been shut up in the library with his lawyer ever since luncheon; she dare not intrude into his presence, and yet it is so late in the afternoon that if they are to go she must begin dressing at once.

She decides upon a middle course, and sends Mitchell with the note and a request for an answer. In a few minutes she hears her husband's footstep approaching.

"Juliet," he says, as he enters the room, "we must go, of course; and I think you had better dress immediately, and go without waiting for me. I will order the carriage for you, and will follow as soon as I can, but I don't suppose I shall get there a moment before dinner-time. I have a good deal of business to get through with Chilling."

So she goes upstairs and dresses for her visit, her heart beating violently at the prospect of meeting Edith again—half in pleasurable anticipation of the reunion, half in fear of the questions she may be asked.

As she comes downstairs into the hall, Lovelace again emerges from the library, and draws her into the morning-room.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

DIDN'T STAY AFTER THAT.—The clock on the mantel tolled 11 P. M., and still the knight lingered, trying to think of something to say, although it was painfully evident that the baron's daughter was just too sleepy for anything.

"I am afraid," he said at last, "that I am like an augur."

"Wherefore, Sir Knight?" she asked, yawning with that highbred courtesy appertaining to the upper classes.

"Because I bore you," he said, smiling proudly at his right good wit.

"Ah, no," she said; "you remind me of an old flint-lock musket!"

"Spoken like a soldier's daughter," quoth he; "and why?"

"Takes you so long to go off," she said, kindly.

At 11.10 P. M. the portcullis fell, with a clang, the draw-bridge was raised, and the castle slept. And away in the star-lit distance the good knight tramped wearily in the wake of the last omnibus, which had gone by two hours before.

A SAN FRANCISCAN having committed suicide on the day set for his marriage, the father of his fiance has brought suit for $2000 against the estate of the deceased, claiming that he spent that sum in wedding preparations.

TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY.

BY F. E. W.

My heart goes back to last July,
  The river flowing at our feet,
And every hour that then went by
  Was full of happiness complete.

The future lay beyond our ken,
  We knew it not, nor cared to know,
We lived but in the future then,
  But that was long ago.

Ah me! to-day and yesterday,
  They seem so wide, so far apart;
Then I was yours, you said, for aye.
  To-day you tear me from your heart.

Go by! forget me if you will,
  It is too late for wild regret;
Yet oh that you but loved me still,
  Or I could but forget!

Miles, The Carpenter

BY ELLA J. CURTIS.

CHAPTER IX.

IN spite of her dignified exit, Miss Heriot felt that the cottage was all too small to contain her in her present mood. Love, pride, wounded feeling, anger against herself for being hurt, and anger against Miles for having hurt her, were all stinging her with the first sharp pangs of their simultaneous attack.

But perhaps the fiercest of all the stabs she endured was that caused by the knowledge that everything was at an end but pain.

She could no longer enjoy the delight of dwelling in secret upon the romance that had come so unexpectedly into her life—no longer indulge herself by hidden glimpses into the state of her own heart. The truth had been rudely dragged into the light.

This man, the village carpenter, loved her, and she loved him; but, rather than confess it, she would let him live on under the impression that she was too cold and heartless to give one thought to the suffering she had brought upon him.

In those first moments after she fled from him, the sense of her own desolation overpowered every other feeling; and as soon as she was certain that he had left the house, she threw a soft shawl over her head and shoulders and went out, in the hope of regaining some amount of composure in the silence and loneliness of the night.

And surely any perturbed mind and bruised heart might have felt soothed and comforted by the stillness and beauty of the scene.

The moon, nearly at the full, was sailing aloft playing at hide and seek among the soft white clouds that raced along before the delicious southwest wind.

It blew with refreshing coolness upon Isabel's burning cheeks; but the throbbing of her heart subsided slowly, and a dozen times at least she had to stop to wipe away the bitter tears she was glad to be able to let fall unseen.

"Oh! if I had but the courage to be true to love!" she cried, as she hurried on, hoping to leave her accusing thoughts behind.

She was going in the direction of Deepmere House, though she had not intentionally turned her steps that way; and when she emerged from the plantation through which the direct path from the cottage lay, she was suddenly recalled from herself and her bitter musings by the surprise of seeing before her what looked, in contrast with the partial darkness of the wood, a brilliant illumination.

The sky at the back of the house was tinged with a yellow glow, the tops of a belt of trees at a little distance had caught the reflection of a light not shed by the moon, and what was that strange cloud that, even as she watched it, seemed to grow thicker, and that unfamiliar and yet not wholly unknown smell that every moment became more pungent?

A few minutes only were spent in puzzled conjecture, and then the truth broke upon the bewildered Isabel. Deepmere was on fire.

She ran about hither and thither calling for help, although she knew there was not a soul near.

An old caretaker and his wife had the coachman's rooms over the stables, and in all probability they were fast asleep at that moment.

There was a Fire Brigade in the county town some four miles distant, but how was the news of the disaster to be sent there? That was the question. The fire had seemingly broken out at the back of the house; but whether it was spreading slowly or rapidly it was impossible for Isabel to tell.

The first thing to be done, she decided, when her presence of mind came back, was to rouse the caretaker and his wife; to start him off on horseback to the town, and his wife on foot to the village to summon help.

And then, all in a moment, the remembrance of the great bell in the tower flashed upon her.

It was hung there for the purpose of giving alarm in case of fire, and the pealing of it would speedily bring aid from every quarter.

As soon, then, as she had sent off the old man and woman, she must make her way to the tower and ring the bell.

She welcomed action gladly as a temporary cure for the ache in her heart; even the calamity that threatened her, for in all probability her house would be burned to the ground, would help her to forget for a time the fight that had to be fought out between those two deadly old foes, love and pride.

She had in her pocket the key that admitted her to the house; but she was half afraid to open the door lest she should be met by a rush of smoke and flame.

But there was only the faintest possible smell of burning wood perceptible when at length she went into the hall, and she believed that the staircase leading to the tower was safe.

She went out again, closing the door behind her, and going round to the stable-yard found the gate leading into it locked and barred; but, after a time, she succeeded in arousing the old couple by her continuous ringing at the bell.

A quarter of an hour or more passed before she got them off, the one to the village, the other to the town; and, as soon as they were fairly on their way, Isabel boldly entered the house alone.

But her courage almost failed her as, on mounting to the first landing, the blinding smoke met and almost drove her back.

She could now form an idea as to the part of the building in which the fire was raging, and it was evident that, up to that moment, it was burning where it had first broken out, and it was just possible that some time might elapse before the principal part of the house was in flames.

She opened no doors, lest the flames should burst out upon her, and thankful beyond measure to find the staircase still safe, she ran on; but when she reached the foot of the narrower flight that led to the tower, she paused a moment to take breath, and her courage began to give way.

She could feel the heat of the fire round her, and was it not more than probable that the room immediately below the belfry, known as the tower bedroom, was in a blaze?

Supposing that the stairs caught while she was in the tower, how should she make her way down again?

But knowing that the one chance of saving any part of the house and its valuable contents lay in the pealing of the great bell, she pulled herself together and flew up the stairs that led past the tower bedroom.

The door stood wide open, and the room was filled with dense black smoke. It was beginning to pour out upon the landing, and she was half-choked and blinded as she made a dash at the door and pulled it to.

Then she rushed up the rest of the staircase, thankful to escape from the stifling atmosphere below.

The belfry was cold and clear, and through the unshuttered window she saw the moonlight streaming over the beautiful lonely park.

That dark clump of beeches in the distance sheltered the cottage to which Miles would come no more.

Mounting the broad deep ledge of the window, she opened the sash and, leaning out, looked down. She was nearly twice the height of an ordinary house from the ground, but she could see that a ladder was raised against the wall of the new building was not high enough to reach the spot where she stood.

"I should never have courage to go down that, even if it were near enough," she said, and then she turned away, feeling so sick and giddy that she was afraid she was going to faint.

But the weakness passed away, and, standing up on the one chair the place contained, she took the rope, bent to her unwonted task with all her strength, and immediately the great bell rang out, and the sound was carried far and wide by the freshening wind; and, strange to say, the man to whom it first conveyed the news that a fire was raging in the old house of Deepmere was Miles, the carpenter.

CHAPTER X.

AN hour later, and the trim lawn and the flower-beds that were the pride of the gardener's heart were cut up and trampled by innumerable feet.

The engine from the town was playing upon the fire, and the firemen, professional and amateur, were working their hardest to get the better of the flames, which unluckily had had such terrible odds that they bade fair to hold their own until the house was burned from cellar to roof. Part of the latter had already fallen in; but the supply of water was abundant, and the fight between the two mighty forces was watched with painful interest, both by those who looked on and those who worked.

And there was one man there that night who worked seemingly with the strength of ten.

His coolness and energy never for one moment flagged, and it was only when a girl rushed to him out of the crowd with her face blanched, and her eyes filled with alarm, that Miles, the carpenter, paused for a moment.

"What was it, Miss Chesney?" he said. "Go back to the cottage. You can do no good here."

"Where is Isabel?" she panted. "I have not seen her since you were with her this evening."

"Nor I since I left her. Is — is she here?"

"I expected to find her here," Helen exclaimed; "but no one has seen her. Where is she? What has become of her? For Heaven's sake, find her for me please, Miles."

"Who rang the tower bell?" he asked, suddenly. "Where is the caretaker's wife who came to give the alarm in the village? Find her if you can, and ask who rang the bell."

But the news that Miss Heriot was missing had already spread, and half-a-dozen people came rushing up to say that it was Miss Isabel herself who rang the alarm, and it was supposed she was still in the tower.

Miles turned deadly white, and he staggered and put out his hand blindly, as if about to fall.

"Then it was not fancy," he said; and his voice had a bitter note in it that went to Helen's heart.

"Ten minutes before you came up, Miss Chesney, I thought I heard a cry for help, and it came from the direction of the bell tower; but not knowing anyone was missing, I took no heed. May Heaven help me if I left her to die!"

As he spoke he made a rush for the chasm that now represented the principal entrance; but a dozen men seized him and held him back. He struggled like a young lion to get free.

"Your mistress is in the bell tower," he shouted; "who will help me to bring her down?"

But half frantic although he was, he could listen to reason; it was the work of a moment, when he once gave way, to convince him that to reach the tower by the staircase was impossible, but by the long ladder the window might be scaled and Miss Heriot safely rescued before it was too late.

The tower itself was still standing firm at the side of the burning house, but the walls, against which a score of stout arms soon reared the ladder, was cracking ominously in several places.

And then strong men held the ladder in its place while Miles, his coat thrown off, and a coil of rope slung upon one arm, ran up it as lightly and easily as if he were mounting a shallow stair.

Presently he disappeared at the window which was open, although the fact that it was so was unnoticed from below, as the smoke was so thick.

And it was the smoke that had hidden the figure of Isabel when she vainly tried to attract attention by waving her handkerchief and calling for help at the utmost pitch of her voice, until terror completely deprived her of the use of it. It was almost her last cry that had fallen unheeded upon the ear of Miles.

It is possible that she might have been able to get down safely had she left the tower when she gave up ringing the alarm, but she was terrified by the volumes of smoke that met her coming up from below; and when at last, rendered half desperate by the peril of her position, she nerved herself to make a bold rush for her life, she found that the fire had already caught the stairs, and that descent by them was impossible.

Miles found her lying insensible on the window seat. The room was stifling with heat and smoke.

Flames were already beginning to burst through the floor, and in a lapse of time so short that he trembled to think of it, it would have been impossible to get her out alive.

The rapture of knowing that he was not too late unnerved him for a moment. He gazed into the unconscious face, his lips quivered, and his eyes grew dim.

"My darling! My own Isabel!" he murmured.

But sentiment and emotion were alike out of place just then. He had the precious life still to save, and his heart thrilled when a hearty shout of encouragement reached him from a hundred voices below as he stepped out on the swaying ladder with Isabel in his arms.

Helen Chesney put her hand over her eyes, lest she should see the gallant fellow fall, and the minutes passed like hours, until once more the cheers and shouts were heard, and she darted forward to receive her rescued friend from the arms that were by that time almost too spent to hold.

When she recovered consciousness, Miles was kneeling beside her; his handsome face was blackened and grimy with smoke, and there was in his anxious, wistful eyes that her heart alone could interpret.

"Was it you who saved me?" she said quietly.

"What I did any of the men were able and willing to do," he answered, humbly, afraid it might hurt her to feel that she owed him any gratitude. He rose as he spoke, not wishing to intrude upon her; but before he could move away she held out her hand, and said—

"I thank you with all my heart."

The sun was rising when Miles passed the cottage on his way back to Oakshott, and as he passed for a moment, he pressed to his lips the extremely dirty fingers her soft, cold little hand had touched.

The next day Isabel lay for the most part still and silent upon a couch in the drawing-room; she knew that her house was a smoking ruin, but she made neither comment upon it, nor moan over her loss, and Helen and Miss Jaconette wondered at her apathy.

They spoke of the bravery of Miles, and told her of how he wanted to dash into the burning building in order to reach the tower as soon as he knew she was there. She said not one word, but in the evening she asked Helen to take a message from her to the village.

"Tell Miles to come to me here to-morrow afternoon," she said. "Be sure you say that I sent for him."

Miss Chesney brought back the young man's reply. He would wait upon Miss Heriot at three o'clock.

At the appointed hour she was in the drawing-room to receive him, and never before had he seen her so richly or so becomingly dressed.

She rarely wore any ornaments, but her fingers were now glittering with rings, and her brilliant girlish beauty seemed even in his eyes enhanced by the gown of dark ruby velvet, trimmed with old lace that fell in such soft folds about her beautiful figure.

Miles was in his workman's dress, and from the pocket of his linen jacket protruded, as usual, his carpenter's rule.

He took it out and placed it, with his cap, upon a chair.

"You sent for me, Madam," was all he said.

"Yes," she answered, and there was a nervous vibration in her voice. "I sent for you because you said you would not come of your own accord, and I knew you would keep your word. I want to thank you again for having got me out of that awful place. But for you, I might have been burned where I lay."

"Do not speak of it, Madam—pray do not speak of it. I am thankful I was at hand, but any man there would have done the same. I would gladly have given my life for you, Miss Heriot, and you know it well."

"And it is because I know it that I sent for you," she cried. "I sent for you to thank you, and to tell you that a few hours before you risked your life to save mine, I was false to myself and cruel and unjust to you, and I ask your pardon most humbly. But perhaps you will forgive me more easily than I can forgive myself."

"What is there I could not forgive?" he broke in.

"And now," she went on—her voice faltered a little, and the color that made her beauty so irresistible flew to her face—"the life I owe to your courage and devotion I ask you to help me to spend as I ought. It is, it must ever be, a poor life, if you are now too proud to share it."

"You ask me to share it as your husband?" exclaimed Miles. "Oh, Miss Heriot, it is too much honor"—he seized the hand she held out, and kissed it—"and happiness far, far greater than any poor words of mine can express. But I am too proud to share all you have to bestow upon me, if you offer it solely from gratitude. Yesterday I dared to tell you that I loved you. If I could hope to win love from you——"

He held her hand, closely pressed by both his own, against his breast — his eloquent eyes held hers, and forced confession.

"You have won it," she answered, very low.

He made no direct answer, but, releasing her hand, he fell on one knee, and then bending low, he kissed the hem of her gown.

"My mistress, my dear mistress!" he said.

Then he rose and added, in a quiet, composed tone that helped her at once to regain self-control:

"Miss Heriot, you are going to do a most unusual thing; and, although the whole happiness of my life depends upon your doing it, I must, for your own sake, insist that you take time to consider."

"I am ready to do what you wish and think best," she answered.

But in spite of this assurance, she was hard to convince that it would be well for him to leave her that very day, and to remain absent for six months.

"When they are over," he said, "you will know better whether you care enough for me to encounter all the prejudices of your position by marrying me. I would not have you bound in any way."

She gave in at last, but not very willingly, although she knew in her heart that his proposal was a wise one.

Indeed, six months would be all too short for the work she had before her, and much as she loved this man, she could not help dreading a little the effect of her announcement that she was about to become his wife.

And yet could any man of gentle birth and fine breeding have surpassed this village carpenter in delicacy and consideration? Accepted lover though he was, he claimed no privilege and insisted upon no right. Hand locked in hand they stood as he bade her farewell; and yet, with those sweet lips so near, he gave her no kiss.

"Every hour—every moment until we meet again, I shall think of you," he said; and then, after a long, long look into her eyes, he took up his cap and his rule and went away.

"Have I dreamt it all?" she wondered, as she saw him go.

Helen, coming in presently, found her standing in the same spot.

"What has happened, dear? Are you ill?" she cried, alarmed at her silence.

"Oh, Nellie"—and Isabel threw herself into friend's arms—"what will they all say? I am going to marry Miles, the carpenter!"

CHAPTER XI.

WHEN the news of the engagement spread (and Isabel made no secret of it), such a storm broke upon her that it required no ordinary amount of courage and determination on her part to stand against it.

But she was honestly in love with the man she had chosen, and all the hard things that were said of him served only to increase her loyalty and devotion.

She knew he was neither an adventurer nor a fortune-hunter, so it scarcely hurt her to hear him called both one and the other. She knew also that she had given him encouragement and led him on step by step.

As for Miles himself, he had shown consideration as well as the greatest wisdom in absenting himself just when most men in his position would have been tempted to keep the hardly-won prize within touch.

His perfect trust in her, the chivalrous respect of his manner, beneath which the instinct of the woman (rendered doubly keen-sighted by her own newly-awakened affection) could detect the ardor of the passion she had excited, fanned her love into a pure and noble affection that would outlive the loss on his part of all his personal attractions.

The remembrance of those words, "My mistress—my dear mistress," clung to her long after she had ceased to dwell upon the handsome face and fine form that would for ever make Miles, the carpenter, a conspicuous figure either in a London drawing-room or a workman's shed.

Yes; she was proud of him, and she had reason to be proud. He might make light of what he had done, but she knew that when, to save her, he had mounted the ladder reared against that cracked and breaking wall, he had taken his life in his hands.

It was many and many a day before she heard from his own lips how his heart quailed as he prepared to descend that frail support with his beloved lady in his arms, and how he found consolation in the thought that, if he fell, they must die together.

Could she be churlish enough to refuse to him the reward he coveted? Was not the sacrifice she made utterly swallowed up and lost in the happiness that awaited her as the wife of such a man? Yes. A hundred times yes.

And what was more, had the sacrifice involved the loss of half her fortune, she would have made it with as light and happy a heart.

But to her friends and acquaintances, who did nothing but alternately pity, reproach, advise, and upbraid her, Isabel indulged in no raptures concerning Miles.

Helen Chesney alone was privileged to get a glimpse into that proud and loving heart, and to hear extracts from the few letters addressed by the low-born lover to his mistress.

Part of his self-imposed time of probation Miles spent abroad; but in January he was coming to London, and in London he meant to remain until the last month of the six had expired; on the first day of the seventh month he would appear to claim the fulfilment of Isabel's promise. If she had changed her mind, she had but to let him know, and he would trouble her no more.

But, although he did not suspect it, every line he wrote bound her more closely to him.

The veiled tenderness he displayed was so captivating, his rare expressions of lover-like fervor were so sweet, that the impetuous and devoted woman to whom they were addressed longed to pull down the barrier his tact and delicacy had raised lest, if anything came between them, her self-respect should suffer.

She spent the winter quietly in London. Part of the autumn was devoted to visiting in country houses; and more than once determined efforts were made by men who would gladly have supplanted the fortunate Miles to shake her allegiance to him.

It was beyond measure aggravating that, with her beauty and fortune, she should throw herself away upon a common carpenter.

But everyone was very curious to see him.

Isabel grew somewhat impatient as soon as she knew he was in town, and but for Miss Chesney's persuasions, it is possible she would have insisted upon seeing him. But she always gave way when reminded that the time of separation had been fixed by Miles himself.

March that year was unusually bright and warm. London was filling fast, and on a succession of fine mornings towards the middle of the month the Row was almost as well filled as in June.

Isabel always enjoyed her morning walk. She occasionally rode; but, being a rather timid horsewoman, she preferred a short stroll with Miss Jaconette or a younger friend.

One morning she and the old lady and an acquaintance common to both were seated together under the trees, watching the crowd of riders who had come out to enjoy the spring sunshine.

Isabel's lovely, happy eyes roved hither and thither; but, if truth must be told, she paid more attention to the people who passed up and down on foot than she did to those on horseback. Was it not just possible that her eyes might be blessed by the sight of him?

Suddenly Miss Jaconette, who had just called attention to two pretty children on piebald ponies, was surprised to see the girl's face glowing with a beautiful blush, while her eyes were fixed intently upon two men who were riding very slowly past, but not near the rails, on their side.

She leaned across Miss Jaconette, and, in a voice she tried in vain to keep steady and natural, asked—

"Can you tell me who the taller of those two men is?"

The lady she addressed put up her glasses, but it seemed as if she did not need their aid, for she answered at once:

"Don't you know him? That is your neighbor, Frank Devonport of Oakshott. How odd that you have never met! I do not know who that is with him."

But Isabel knew him well enough. He was Miles, the carpenter.

CHAPTER XII.

BUT how came Miles to be riding in company with Frank Devonport? And it was not that they were side by side by accident; they were talking to one another, and were apparently on very friendly terms.

Isabel could not answer the question herself, nor could it be answered by anyone for her.

It is possible that, had she inquired, her curiosity would have been gratified, but as she could not put the question to Miles himself, she would not put it to anyone.

That unexpected sight of her lover, too, was so exciting that she made an excuse to Miss Jaconette for asking her to leave the Park at once. She felt that she could not bear to see him pass again as the merest stranger might have done, and to meet him face to face in such a crowd would be more trying still.

So there was nothing left but flight; but she had the consolation of knowing that the time of probation was fast coming to an end.

And what is to be said of the meeting between those two when the last day of the sixth month had come and gone, and they once more stood hand in hand, and the man's speaking eyes looked into those of the woman who had faithfully kept her promise and been true to love and him?

It is scarcely too much to say that, as with a blushing face, Isabel went forward to meet him when he came in, she forgot that the well-dressed, distinguished-looking young fellow before her had ever stood, cap in hand, awaiting her orders, and that he was by trade a common carpenter.

How did she meet him? What did she say? She held out both hands; her sweet face wore an expression of the most complete and yet modest self-surrender, and in a low earnest voice she said:

"You are very, very welcome."

The man's face, so grave and calm when he entered, grew radiant; he drew her into his arms and kissed her.

"At last I may call you mine," he said. "You will be my wife, Isabel?"

"Yes," she answered, "your loving, faithful wife."

Before they parted the wedding-day was fixed, and Isabel immediately left town, accompanied by Miss Jaconette and Miss Chesney, for Squireshire.

She had taken a large furnished house close to her own ruined Deepmere, for the cottage could not accommodate the numerous guests who were invited to the marriage of the wealthy and well-born Miss Heriot with the penniless Miles, the carpenter.

It was the bridegroom's wish that the ceremony should take place in Oakshott church. That was the only point that Isabel found it a little difficult to concede to him, and the only matter upon which, so it seemed to her, his usual tact and consideration failed him.

But she gave in, for after all it did not signify; everyone in the county knew that she was going to marry the Oakshott carpenter.

She was daily becoming more and more indifferent to the comments that were so freely made upon her choice, for she had now no fear that he would not be able to hold his own among the most fastidious and critical of her well-born friends. Miss Jaconette, who was considered an expert in the matter of good breeding, declared she had no fault to find with either his manner or behavior; and Isabel used sometimes laughingly to remind him of the way he used to address her when he came first to the cottage.

She admitted also that she was curious to know why he had not from the first shown himself at his best.

He parried her questions gaily.

"Perhaps," he said, "I wanted to prove to you the truth of the two well-known lines:

'The rank is but the guinea stamp,
A man's a man for a' that.'

"And, besides, I was told that Miss Heriot was an advanced Radical, and I naturally thought that my rude speech would not offend her."

"It offended me very much," she exclaimed. "I hated it; it was so out of character with your appearance."

"Then you condescended to notice the poor carpenter's appearance?"

"Not more, I suspect, than you noticed mine," she retorted, saucily.

"But a humble artisan may surely admire the gracious lady for whom he works?"

"It was solely with the view of improving your mode of speech that I went so often to talk to you at your work," she explained.

"Was it so, Miss? That were very good of you."

His sudden and comical relapse into the rough accent and mode of speech struck her anew as so ludicrous and incongruous that she laughed aloud with girlish glee.

Then she mocked him prettily, and he sat watching her with such love and admiration in his eyes that she turned away blushing and confused, for it was still new to her to have her lover by her side.

Her nearest male relation, a cousin called George Heriot, was coming to Squireshire to give her away, and Isabel was secretly very anxious that Miles should make a good impression upon him, for he had been extremely out-spoken in his opinion of the carpenter as soon as the news of the engagement reached him.

But his opposition came suddenly to an end. Whether it was that he could not resist his lovely cousin's plea that he would at least reserve judgment until he had met Miles, or whether he was won by Helen Chesney's assurance that the lucky carpenter was, in every respect, unobjectionable, is not known; but he began all at once to treat the affair as a capital joke, and he and Helen—with whom, by the way, he fell in love at first sight, and proposed to at the end of a week—seemed rather inclined to indulge in what Isabel considered unseemly merriment when anyone mentioned Miles.

It was not very kind of them to laugh and make jokes at her expense; but then they did not mean to be unkind or disagreeable, so she let it pass.

"I am glad George is coming before any of the others," she said to Helen on the morning of the day her cousin was expected. "He will be able to see more of Miles, and I want them to know one another."

"Why do you always call him Miles?" Helen asked. "So many people have asked me what his surname is, and I am obliged to say Miles. By the way, what is his name?"

"Is it possible you have never heard? His name is Frank. I fancy old Mr. Devonport was kind to his father; but I never question him about his family. I might hurt his feelings without intending it."

"It is a curious coincidence, dear, is it not, that you should marry a man named Frank?" said Miss Chesney. "But I suppose you will always call him Miles?"

"I shall call him by any name he chooses," replied the dutiful, if somewhat infatuated, bride-elect.

As the girls were speaking, a telegram was handed to Isabel.

"It was from Miles," she said. "I am so disappointed. He says he is afraid he may not be able to come down this evening. Is it not provoking? He will not have a quiet evening with George."

"And do you suppose that he and George would stay away from us in order to get acquainted with one another?" cried Miss Chesney, laughing. "If you cannot answer for your 'young man,' my dear, I can answer for mine."

It was past five o'clock when the dog-cart which had been sent to the station to meet George Heriot was seen coming up the drive.

"He has brought someone from town," said Helen, who was watching from the window. "I see two gentlemen. George is driving."

"I do not care who it is. I know who it is not," said Isabel, with a little sigh.

"Very tersely and lucidly expressed, my dear. But this stranger may be very charming."

"It is quite possible," Isabel answered; but she could not be roused to take any interest in him.

In two or three minutes George Heriot came in alone.

"How well you look, you two!" he said, as he embraced the girls one after the other. "Bell, my dearest cousin, I am afraid you will scold me; but you must not be very cross, please. I brought a man from town who is very anxious to know you—Frank Devonport." George threw a quick look at Helen, and she gave a rapid nod in return. "But if you cannot put him up, he can go on to Oakshott after dinner."

"My dear George, of course I can put him up. What are you and Helen looking so mysterious about? I shall be very glad to see Mr. Devonport. I had no idea you knew him. Where is he? Why does he not come in?"

"He is afraid, I think. I must fetch him. Helen—where is she?"

Miss Chesney had vanished.

George Heriot left the room; and, after what seemed to Isabel an unaccountably long delay, the door opened, and a gentleman came in alone.

"Why, Miles!" she exclaimed, running to him, "you were able to come after all. I am so glad."

But, as he clasped her in his arms and held her in a close embrace, with a curious expression, half of doubt and half of entreaty in his eyes, the truth suddenly dawned upon her. Who was the man George had brought from town?

"What?" she cried, and with the quick passion of a frightened puzzled child she tried to break away from him. "Are you Frank Devonport? Is there no Miles?"

"Yes, my darling. Do not turn your face from me, Isabel. Here is Frank Miles Devonport—once the carpenter, and forever and ever the man who loves you better than his life. Forgive me, love, for deceiving you, but when you refused to know Frank Devonport, I vowed to try and win you as Miles, the village carpenter."

"And you said you would never marry Miss Heriot unless she proposed to you, and I asked you to marry me—you know I did." She gave a little sob, and kept her face resolutely turned away.

"But Isabel, my darling, you knew I loved you, and if you loved me as Miles, the carpenter, surely you can forgive me?"

For a few moments she stood aloof, her her breath came fast, and her eyes were on the ground, then she raised them and met the ardent, pleading gaze of the man who, with one hand gently placed on her shoulder, waited for her to speak.

That one look was enough. She threw her arms round his neck, and whispered, as he kissed her with a boldness and fervor that Miles had never dared to show—

"I do not care what you are called—I love you."

* * * * * *

It turned out that George Heriot was in the secret from the moment his opposition to the marriage had suddenly ceased, for Frank Devonport and he were old friends. Helen Chesney had guessed who Miles was when she found the cigarette-case with the monogram, "F. M. D.," upon it, and the lady whom Isabel had questioned in the Park had not noticed, in her careless haste to answer, which of the two men Miss Heriot meant, and had in reality named the one whom Isabel knew as Miles, the carpenter.

[THE END.]

Scientific and Useful.

PHOTOGRAPHS ON METAL.—A photographer is said to have invented a process for producing photographs on metal. It is stated that up to the present time no one has been able to do this. The work is described as very pretty and very delicate, and has been executed on watch-cases, buttons, lockets, breast-pins and other pieces of metal. The process is a secret one, and the negatives are taken instantaneously and by means of a flash-light. A liquid used for developing the negatives appears to be the vital part of the production of photographs on metal.

WIRE GUN.—The new English wire gun has thrown a five hundred pound shell a distance of twelve miles, the greatest distance ever covered by a cannon ball. For execution the French are acknowledged to have the finest guns and projectiles in Europe. One of their shells has been shot through an armor plate twenty inches thick, and came out with its steel point uninjured. The last French rifle as described has a ball so small that a soldier can carry two hundred and twenty rounds, shoots with a new smokeless powder, and its bullet pierces a brick wall eight inches thick at five hundred yards.

SAFETY IN HOUSES.—The Chief of the London Fire Brigade, in a magazine article on the protection of dwelling houses from fire, says "there is a great deal of faulty construction in houses in consequence of architects being seldom employed. Cracked walls are almost sure to give way in case of fire. 'Party' walls should be carried at least three feet above the highest part of the roofs. All roofs should be provided with windows or openings by which the inmates of a house could escape in the event of the stairs becoming impassable. The best material for stairs is wrought iron and the worst stone, since the latter yields to an amount of heat which does not affect ordinary respiration. Whenever a house has both wooden and stone stairs the inmates should, in case of fire, invariably make for the wooden stairs, as affording the only hope of escape."

Farm and Garden.

GRAPE ARBORS.—Wire is preferable to poles, laths or boards as a grape trellis, as the tendrils of the vines seem better able to take hold of the wire than when other materials are used. The ends should, of course, be well braced.

OIL.—Plenty of oil now will effect a saving. As a rule, farm implements and machinery are neglected to a certain extent. It is better to oil too often than to omit doing so at the proper time. The oil-can is one of the best friends the farmer has.

WEEDS.—Every weed that grows near a plant takes from the soil the elements for its support, and struggles for existence with the plants for that purpose. In the dry season weeds will appropriate the moisture that may be required for the desirable plants. The best mode of withstanding the effects of drought, therefore, is clean cultivation, whereby the grass and weeds are prevented from injuring the crop plants.

TREE LABELS.—Tree planters generally affix a label to their fruit trees to remember the variety. But wooden labels are perishable. Zinc, when slightly roughened by oxidation, may be written on with a soft lead pencil, and this writing soon becomes as permanent as chemical ink. The oxidation of the labels is effected by leaving them a few weeks in a damp place. These labels have been perfectly clear after ten years' exposure to the elements.

THE TROWEL.—A farmer handy with tools will find a trowel a most useful implement. Cement costs little, and, aside from repairing walls and stopping leaks in cisterns, it can be put to many other important uses. One of these is to line wooden boxes, making them water-tight. If manger and feed boxes are overlaid with cement horses will be much less liable to contract the vice of cribbing. In stopping holes in granaries cement is better than merely covering up the holes with tin, as is usually done. Rats and mice make short work with a tin covering, but cement effectually turns them if well made and well laid.

FOOD AND POULTRY.—Feed should never be kept constantly before the hens for two reasons: it is wasteful and unprofitable. It is wasteful for the reason that as long as they have a plentiful supply before them they will give themselves little trouble in seeking for food elsewhere. It is extravagant because they will not only eat more than they require for healthy digestion, but will scratch and waste a large portion. These objections are small matters, however, compared with the injury occasioned by overfeeding, which causes them to become excessively fat, when they will lay but few eggs.

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A Path in Life.

In entering upon a path in life many elements control the choice of purpose, many conditions arise that determine the best course of action to be followed, but there are a few guiding principles that ought to be impressed upon all.

Singleness of purpose is an important condition of successful effort. It is not necessary to be narrow in order to be a specialist, but there should be one dominating and controlling aim in life to give direction to study and effort.

This can seldom be judiciously selected in advance of experience, but it should be sought out as early in life as possible, that a vacillating disposition may not be developed before it is found.

Another important condition of success is devotion to the work in hand and to the interest of the employer of one's labor. There are counter-duties on the part of the employer, but whether these are observed or not the workman should train himself to rigidly observe his own obligations. For the time being he should be thoroughly loyal, eager to serve, counting his employer's interest as his own.

Reward is sure to come in some shape. If the employer is too blinded by selfishness and narrowness of view to see and reward faithful service, others will do so and offer advancement to the faithful worker.

There are some trades and callings that can easily be regulated by a time table, in which there is no such thing as extra service, or that permit an easy adjustment of extra pay for extra hours. Even in these there is opportunity for the greatest difference between hearty, willing service and evasion of duty.

But there are other trades and callings where at particular seasons of the year extra work is required, for which the customs of the trade provide no extra pay. There are jobbing and building trades in which the mere disposition of the employe may mean the difference between profit and loss on his work to those who engage him.

As an illustration of a principle that extends to all work, but is more clearly shown in some trades than others, take the case of house mechanics who are sent out to do small jobs, for which their time must be charged by the hour. The workman who is thoughtful of his employer's interests makes sure that he takes with him from the shop the necessary tools. He arranges his work so as to have as little lost time as possible. If he finds that by a little extra work at noon or after six o'clock he can complete a job so as to save a second trip from the shop to a distant place, he does not hesitate about doing that extra work, though he may get no pay therefor.

Such a workman helps to build up his employer's business, and thus indirectly benefits himself. When a dull time comes and the force of workmen must be reduced, he is preferred as one to be kept in the shop, even at a temporary loss to the employer. Other master mechanics observe him, and their shops are open to him if for any reason he should desire to make a change.

It is far different with the workman who adds to the cost of small jobs and discredits his employer by frequent trips to the shop to get tools that a little foresight would have provided him with; who loiters on the way and who is jealously careful not to do a stroke of work during the noon hour or after six o'clock, and who will not exert himself to complete a job in one day, though the carrying of it over may involve a half day of charged time.

Such workmen help to break down the business of their employers and thus deprive themselves of work. When dull times come they are the first to be discharged, and if their habits have become known they are the last to be employed in other shops.

The one workman is cheerfully advanced to partnership when opportunity offers, the other remains a journeyman; the one may start business for himself, sure that his reputation for cheerful industry will find him engagements; the other is debarred by his reputation from employment by those who know him, and has difficulty in gaining the confidence and help of strangers.

All branches of labor do not present as sharp contrasts between the devoted and the indifferent employe as are here given, but they may be accepted as a type of differences that exist in every branch of work, from that of laborers to that of college professors.

Those who deserve and receive promotion are those who do their full duty cheerfully and without regard as to whether they receive immediate rewards for so doing.

When such devoted sevice is not appreciated (as it will not be in some rare cases) the remedy is not to be sought in neglect of duty, in a reduction of the work done to the level of the wages paid, but in a change of place to one where the wages will be raised to the level of the service.

There is no more important principle for the young workman to observe in the beginning and all through life than that of thorough devotion to the interests of those who employ him, whether they be master or workman who pay him weekly wages, or customers who engage him as a contractor, or the general public who buy goods at his store.

To achieve success he must be honest in the broad sense, devoted to the interests of those who give him employment.

Pleasure is a shadow, wealth is vanity, and power a pageant; but knowledge is ecstatic in enjoyment, perennial in fame, unlimited in space and infinite in duration. In the performances of its sacred offices, it fears no danger, spares no expense, looks in the volcano, dives into the ocean, perforates the earth, wings its flight into the skies, explores sea and land, contemplates the distant, examines the minute, comprehends the great, ascends to the sublime—no place too remote for its grasp, no height too exalted for its reach.

God has laid upon us many severe trials in this world; but he has created labor for us, and all is compensated. Thanks to labor, the bitterest tears are dried; a serious consoler, it always promises less than it bestows; a pleasure unparalleled, it is still the salt of other pleasures. Everything abandons you—gayety, wit love,—labor alone is always present, and the profound enjoyment it produces. Have I said enough? No; for to these privileges of labor we must add a greater yet; that it is like the sun—God has made it for the whole world.

If that marvellous microcosm, man, with all the costly cargo of his faculties and powers, were indeed a rich argosy, fitted out and freighted for shipwreck and destruction, who amongst us that tolerate the present only from the hope of the future, who that have any aspirings of a high and intellectual nature about them, could be brought to submit to the disgusting mortifications of the voyage?

Sensibility appears to me, says a famous author, to be neither good nor evil in itself, but in its application. Under the influence of Christian principle, it makes saints and martyrs; ill-directed, or uncontrolled, it is a snare, and the source of every temptation; besides, as people cannot get it if it is not given them, to decant on it seems to me as idle as to recommend people to have black eyes or fair complexions.

If any sensual weakness arise, we are to yield all our sound forces to the overthrowing of so unnatural a rebellion; wherein how can we want courage, since we are to deal against so feeble an adversary, that in itself is nothing but weakness? Nay, we are to resolve that if reason direct it, we must do it, we will do it; for to say "I cannot" is childish, and "I will not" is womanish.

Those who have lost an infant are never, as it were, without an infant child. Their other children grow up to manhood and womanhood, and suffer all the changes of mortality; but this one alone is rendered an immortal child; for death has arrested it with his kindly harshness, and blessed it into an eternal image of youth and innocence.

Born poetry and philosophy are prodigal of eulogy over the mind which ransoms itself by its own energy from a captivity to custom, which breaks the common bounds of empire, and cuts a Simplon over mountains of difficulty for its own purposes, whether of good or of evil.

It is not work that kills men, it is worry. Work is healthy; you can hardly put more upon a man than he can bear. Worry is rust upon the blade. It is not the revolution that destroys the machinery, but the friction. Fear secretes acids, but love and trust are sweet juices.

After all, the most natural beauty in the world is honesty and moral truth; for all beauty is truth. True features make the beauty of a face, and true proportions the beauty of architecture, as true measures that of harmony and music. In poetry, which is all fable, truth still is the perfection.

Too many have no idea of the subjection of their temper to the influence of religion, and yet what is changed, if the temper is not! If a man is as passionate, malicious, resentful, sullen, moody, or morose after his conversion as before it, what is he converted from or to?

A man is seldom more manly than when he is what you call unmanned—the source of his emotion is championship, pity and courage; the instinctive desire to cherish those who are innocent and unhappy, and defend those who are tender and weak.

Truth, whether in or out of fashion, is the measure of knowledge, and the business of the understanding; whatever is besides that, however authorized by consent, or recommended by rarity, is nothing but ignorance, or something worse.

Heaven and God are best discerned through tears; scarcely perhaps are discerned at all without them. The constant association of prayer with the hour of bereavement and the scenes of death suffice to show this.

To me there is something thrilling and exalting in the thought that we are drifting forward into a splendid mystery—into something that no mortal eye has yet seen, no intelligence has yet declared.

Knowledge that terminates in curiosity and speculation is inferior to that which is useful; and of all useful knowledge that is the most so which consists in a due care and just notion of ourselves.

All the good things of this world are no further good to us than as they are of use; and whatever we may heap up to give to others, we enjoy only as much as we can use, and no more.

I will have a care of being a slave to myself, for it is a perpetual, a shameful, and the heaviest of all servitudes; and this may be done by moderate desires.

The World's Happenings.

Tan-colored boots for men is a London craze.

An Iowa man lived six days with a broken neck.

A Detroit sign reads: "Corns removed while you wait."

An Italian peddler in New York paid a fine of $5 with pennies.

Wallop is the suggestive name of a school teacher of the Pacific Coast.

A bridge across the English Channel to cost $160,000,000 is contemplated.

At a recent ball in Paris the cotillion began at 4 A. M. and lasted until 7.

The business of Guinness & Co., the Dublin liquor men, is valued at $65,000,000.

The ordinary English summer is said to consist of "three fine days and a thunder-storm."

The Prince of Wales has 17 brothers-in-law, 10 uncles, 57 cousins, and 36 nephews and nieces.

Rearing dogs for their skins is practiced in Manchuria and Mongolia, just as sheep farming elsewhere.

A new thing in England is a walking-stick made hollow, with a place in it for holding 2 or 3 cigars.

The largest railroad station in the world is St. Pancras, London, 700 feet long, 243 wide, 100 high, covering 10 acres.

A colored woman near Albany, Ga., was struck by lightning and killed while she was smoking a pipe in her doorway.

The area of dry land in the world is estimated at 55,000,000 square miles; the area of the ocean, 137,300,000 square miles.

A Poughkeepsie, N. Y., man has secured a patent upon the old idea of using oil to prevent the breaking of heavy seas.

A Miss Leg, of Montana, has just married a man named Hand. She thought she would rather be a right Hand than a left Leg.

A thief arrested in New York lately, after having done most dangerous climbing to the upper stories of a house, possessed but one leg.

On a windy day in New York recently 18 hats were blown from the Brooklyn Bridge to return no more to the heads of their sorrowing owners.

Fisher Thompson, a student in Boston, stole 230 silk and 300 cotton handkerchiefs from numerous persons before justice cut short his career of kleptomania.

The tragedy of Cain and Abel was reenacted in Wise county, Texas, recently, when two brothers named Freeman killed each other in a quarrel over a cane-mill.

The German Emperor, unlike either Kaiser Wilhelm I or "Unser Fritz," is strongly prejudiced against Freemasonry, and has in consequence never joined the craft.

Cats are found to be the best exterminators of rabbits in New Zealand. They do great havoc among the young ones, and in some sections scarcely a rabbit was to be seen.

The Marquis of Ailesbury, who was warned off English race courses for swindling with his horses, has applied to be restored to his former position on the turf without effect.

A sailor, 70 years old, started from Astoria, Oregon, last March, on a wager of $200, that he could walk to Portland, Me. He has already walked nearly 3000 miles and is confident of success.

A California Chinaman has found a use for the bugs and beetles which are attracted and killed by the electric lights. He gathers them and pickles them in brandy. "Heap good for cold," he says.

Lord Tollemache, the English peer, who recently sold three of his family pictures for $220,000, has expended $227,500 in purchasing a steam brewery at Ipswich, with 60 beer saloons attached, for his tenth son, Mr. Hamilph Tollemache.

A most remarkable coincidence in connection with a Berks county, Pa., family, Shilling by name, is that both parents were born on February 22, their marriage took place on February 22, and all of their six children (which includes two sets of twins) were born on February 22.

"Just wait till I get a whack at another criminal," said a New York judge when a $75,000 embezzler slipped through his hands by a flaw in the indictment. The next "criminal" was a young girl, charged with the abduction of a $2 canary bird, and the judge sent her up for five years!

Ethel Jones, of China, Me., an infant, was left outdoors to play by her mother, and was attacked by a large rooster. When her mother rescued her, blood from three cuts made by the spurs covered the child's face, and very serious injuries would probably have been inflicted had the rescue been longer delayed.

A man out in Indiana has levied upon a yoke of oxen belonging to a neighbor who was engaged to marry the former's daughter, but who did not put in an appearance on the day fixed for the ceremony. The disappointed father wishes to be reimbursed in the sum of $45, which, he claims, is the price of the wedding breakfast provided by him on that occasion.

The Shah of Persia recently had a tooth pulled in the presence of all his court. The operator was a Swede, and the head executioner made himself conspicuous during the seance. There is no knowing what might have happened to the dentist had his majesty lost his temper with the pain. As it was, the Shah presented him with a purse of gold and a shawl.

The letter-head of a storekeeper in Wallingford, Conn., is comprehensive, and indicates a universality of occupation on his part. It runs thus: "Confectionery, toys, ice cream, tobacco, cigars, pipes, news room, stationery, blank notes, drafts, blank books, temperance drinks, bread, pies, fruits, tea, coffee, base ball goods, fish hooks, etc. Agent Anchor line steamers. Drafts on Europe for sale."

LIFE.

BY LOUISE MALCOM STENTON.

I.

When I was young, a blithesome maid,
Life seemed a fairy dream—
And I was like a little boat,
Swift floating down its stream.
I spread my sails, my flag unfurled,
And waved a challenge to the world,
To chill my courage, daunt my hope,
That I with earthly ills could cope.

II.

I gaily plucked Life's flow'rets fair,
And, smiling, spurned each carking care;
I danced along my sunlit path
With childhood's happy, trustful faith:
That nought of sorrow, nought of death,
Should e'er my unlined brow enwreath;
And golden lovelight's glorious ray
Shone sparkling o'er my flowery way.

III.

Long ere my life had reached its noon,
I said 'twas but a worthless boon;
The harsh, remorseless demon, Death,
Chilled all my hopes with icy breath.
He robbed me of my loved ones dear,
And filled my soul with haunting fear
That e'en the last should not be left
To soothe my heart, sad and bereft.

The White Lady.

BY PAUL DENHAM.

HAUNTED? Rubbish! I am surprised at you, Edward!" And Mr. George Jessamer threw his cigar-end into the fire, with a gesture of impatience. "What on earth does it matter whether the house is haunted or not, so long as it is cheap!"

"Not much perhaps to you, uncle, as you are not going to live there, nor to me, since I have not the slightest belief in the supernatural," replied Edward Allen quietly; "but to Maggie it might matter a great deal."

"I hope not! I understood Miss Dayne was a sensible girl, superior to the generality of young ladies," said Mr. Jessamer sarcastically. "However, that is quite immaterial. You can please yourself about residing there; but I have made up my mind to purchase the Grange. It is a capital house, the grounds are really charming, and the price is almost nominal. It would be folly to lose it; one might wait a long time before again meeting with such a bargain!"

"Perhaps so; but you must admit that the house has a bad name, uncle."

"Well, what's in a name? If that is any real drawback we can easily give it a better one, though, to my mind, Thistleton Grange sounds well enough. If there are a few foolish people in Muddleton who believe that there are ghosts perpetually rambling about the corridors, what does it signify? You don't believe, nor do I; and Mrs. Meekins, who has lived there for the last thirty-five years, assures me that she has never seen the least sign of a ghost. Why, if there were anything amiss, do you suppose that woman would live there alone?"

"Perhaps she is on friendly terms with the nocturnal visitants——"

"Perhaps she rides on a broomstick and should be ducked in the pond!" interjected Mr. Jessamer testily. "Fires, fresh air, paint, paper, and whitewash will lay the only evil spirits there are in the house—namely, damp, neglect, and disorder!"

"It has been unoccupied for a long time, has it not, uncle?"

"Yes, thanks to the vagrant habits of its owner, Roland Bertram; and now that he has taken to himself a French wife, there is less chance than ever of his settling in England. Anyhow he has no intention of returning to the Grange; his instructions are clear and concise—'Sell it at any price, to any bidder'!"

"The place has belonged to the Bertrams for some time, has it not?" asked Edward Allen.

"Nearly two hundred years. They were great people here once," replied Mr. Jessamer; "but they have fallen away sadly, and Roland is a—well, not exactly a fool, but the next thing to it—he calls himself a poet!"

"Strange that he should wish to dispose of the home of his fathers," said Edward, ignoring the latter part of his uncle's sentence. He had some poetic tendencies himself, and the allusion was not complimentary. "And to sell it at a loss too!"

"Perhaps he wants money; however, I have nothing to do with his reasons. He writes to me—'Jessamer, sell the Grange.' I put it into the market, but I get no offers; I make a bid myself, and Mr. Bertram jumps at the proposal, begs me to conclude the bargain and take possession as soon as ever I can. It is my belief he is just as superstitious as some of the other brilliant Muddleton people, and believes in the ghost as devoutly as they do. Well, 'ill blows the wind that profits nobody.' You will not find any other residence half so convenient and comfortable—nor half so cheap. Of course, if you do condescend to live in the Grange, you will be my tenant at a nominal rent. In short, I think you are a very lucky fellow to have the chance of securing a home offered you; and, if Maggie Dayne has an iota of common sense, she will say so too."

Mr. George Jessamer was the principal lawyer in Muddleton, a thriving market-town in one of the midland counties, and Edward Allen was his nephew and partner.

Mr. Jessamer was what is probably called a "warm" man; he owned Stoneleigh, a pleasant little house on the outskirts of the town, and had an imposing office in the best part of the High Street. Even the County Bank and the Universal Assurance Office could not boast of more plate-glass or a more highly polished door-plate than Jessamer and Allen, and within all was neat, orderly, and comfortable.

It was not so much by legal business, in the ordinary acceptation of term, that Mr. Jessamer made his money; he was a house and estate agent, he collected rents, and invested money in mortgages, his speculations always seeming to turn out well.

By slow and almost imperceptible degrees he had risen from the position of a mere clerk in an attorney's office to being the principal lawyer of a country town, highly respected for his honesty, his strict adherence to truth, and his plain common sense.

Every honor that Muddleton could bestow had been conferred upon him. He was a town councillor, a poor law guardian, and a churchwarden.

He might have been mayor over and over again, if he had so chosen, but that dignity he steadily refused; it pleased him better to have the management of his fellow-townsmen's estates, to make their wills and renew their leases, than to wield the sceptre of municipal authority.

For many years Mr. Jessamer had lived alone in the apartments over his offices; but, as his business increased and his worldly affairs generally prospered, he resolved to take a house, and set up an establishment on his own account.

Great was the excitement, many were the conjectures, and frequent the discussions held by the matrons of Muddleton when it became known that the lawyer had purchased Stoneleigh, and was furnishing it in splendid style.

It was popularly believed that Mr. Jessamer was about to be married; but popular belief was entirely mistaken; Mr. Jessamer took possession of his pleasant home himself, and enjoyed its beauty and comfort in solitude for three years.

He was a handsome man, middle-aged, in a good position, fond of society, and hospitable.

His friends and neighbors could not help wondering why he did not marry. Though he in no way avoided female society, and might often be seen on a summer evening playing lawn-tennis with one of the Doctor's daughters, or strolling through the fields with Jane and Laura Caxton, the Curate's sisters, no one even dreamed of designating any particular lady as his intended wife—in fact, Mr. Jessamer was so generally polite and attentive that he could never be accused of being particularly so to anybody.

At length there arrived a lady at Stoneleigh—Miss Patience Jessamer, the lawyer's elder sister.

She had been a governess in one family for over fifteen years, and during that time had resided chiefly abroad. When the last of half-a-dozen daughters was "finished" and successfully married, Mrs. Woodfield parted with Miss Jessamer with sincere regret, for they had been more like friends and companions than mistress and governess.

Patience did not like the thought of having to go amongst strangers, who would perhaps treat her in a very different manner from that to which she had been accustomed.

However, she had saved some money, so there was no necessity for her to accept the first situation that offered; and, in the meantime, she was seized with a strange longing for a glimpse of England once more.

Her home, a quaint red-roofed old farm-house near Leamington, had passed into the hands of strangers. William, her younger and favorite brother, was dead: Emily, her only sister, who had also been a governess, had married a Captain Allen, and was in Canada with her husband; and George was a successful lawyer at Muddleton.

They had never been very great friends, George and Patience; but he was the only relative she had in England, so she wrote and asked if she might pay him a short visit—wrote from Leamington, where she was staying for old associations' sake, though few friends or even acquaintances remained, and even these failed to recognize her.

George's answer did him credit; he took up a railway-guide, and found there was a train for Cattield in half an hour, and one from there to Warwick.

Sending a message to his housekeeper to prepare for a lady visitor, he started without delay, and brought Patience back in time for dinner.

Brother and sister were glad to see each other, and agreeably surprised to find that many of the little angularities of temper and habit that had caused them to disagree in their early days had disappeared; their peculiarities had been smoothed away by time and contact with the world.

Patience thought her brother a pleasant, polite, easy-tempered man; he had a will of his own, but he was none the worse for that; and he considered her a well-bred lady-like woman, well informed, and with a certain air of easy companionableness about her that was pleasant.

Patience was a woman of the world, with plenty of shrewd common sense, and when George asked her to give up the idea of going out as a governess again, and to become his housekeeper, she consented willingly.

"Of course, if you should marry, George——" she began; but he stopped her abruptly, with a decisive wave of the hand.

"I shall never marry, Patience—that is decided once and for ever; don't allude to the subject again!"

So the years passed by. Mr. Jessamer grew richer, his business increased, his house was considered one of the pleasantest in Muddleton, and even the most inveterate match-maker had given up all hope of ever seeing any other mistress at Stoneleigh than Miss Patience. Captain Allen and his wife both died, and Edward, their only child, came to Muddleton, to take a place in his uncle's office.

The young man had studied law for several years, and had had some lofty notions of going in for the higher branches of the profession. He was ambitious, and not deficient either in perseverance or talent; his worst dissipation was writing pastoral poetry, his greatest weakness a partiality for building castles in the air. He might have overcome these little failings, devoted himself to his legal studies more assiduously, got called to the bar, and have remained a briefless barrister for years, had it not been for an accident. He fell in love.

While staying for a few days with a friend and fellow-student at Richmond, he met Maggie Dayne.

She was his friend's cousin, an orphan dependent on the care and bounty of her relatives. They were very kind to her, and Maggie made herself useful. On the whole, it was a very unhappy life; but Edward Allen soon saw that she was not quite contented, and, notwithstanding his wretched prospects, he asked Maggie to become his wife, and she consented.

It was then, for the first time, Edward Allen thought seriously of his uncle's oft-repeated proposal, that he should go to Muddleton and take a place in the office, with a view to future partnership. Mr. Jessamer was growing older, he wanted some one near him upon whom he could entirely depend.

Edward was neglecting such a chance as was not offered to one young man in a thousand. A good steady respectable business, a tolerable income, a pleasant home 'Stoneleigh—what more could a young man want?

As for the absurd fancy of becoming Attorney-General, that was very well for a boy; but Edward was five-and-twenty, he had spent more than half the small patrimony left by his father, and he was apparently no nearer earning his bread than when he first entered as a student at the Middle Temple.

One day, when they were walking under the trees in Richmond Park, Edward laid all the facts of the case before Maggie, and asked her opinion.

Very wisely she advised him to accept his uncle's offer and go to Muddleton without further delay, and Edward went.

Of course he told all about his engagement, and that it was with the intention of making a home for Maggie that he came. Mr. Jessamer did not object. If Edward were willing to work for two years in the office at a fixed salary, and then to place what capital he had in the business, Mr. Jessamer promised to take him into partnership and allow him one-third of the profits.

"And on that you can marry as soon as you please," he added—"unless indeed you mean to begin with a carriage and pair."

The two years were ended, the deed of partnership was executed and signed, the new brass door-plate bearing the names of Jessamer and Allen was affixed, and the date for Edward's marriage was almost settled; the only thing not yet decided upon was a suitable residence.

There were few vacant houses in Muddleton, and Edward was resolved that Maggie should have a pleasant home. Mr. Jessamer had made up his mind that they should reside at Thistleton Grange, and he followed up the idea with unwearying persistency.

* * * * * *

Thistleton Grange had a history, and not a very pleasant one.

The circumstances, as far as they were ever known, were in themselves simply tragical, and would have aroused only the sympathetic sorrow of people less morbidly addicted to mystery and horror than the inhabitants of Muddleton; but, when once the faintest whisper of anything supernatural got afloat, it was seized, repeated, magnified, distorted out of all shape, and implicitly believed in.

Nine out of any dozen of the inhabitants would as soon have thought of doubting the fact of their own existence as that the "White Lady" of Thistleton Grange was a reality. It was not a matter for doubt or conjecture; she had been seen—that poor pale-faced white robed lady—gliding along the corridors, pausing at the windows, and, worst of all, standing on the low stout balustrade that ran round the roof, her white figure clearly defined against the sky.

Doctor Richardson, as sensible and veracious a man as any in the county of Warwick, saw her; and, when some one declared that he had fallen asleep on his way home and dreamed of the apparition, he shook his head and held his tongue; he knew he was neither deceived nor mistaken.

Mr. Broadbent, the Vicar, returning from the bedside of a sick parishioner, paused and held his breath in mortal terror as he passed the entrance to the Grange.

The Lady, clearly and unmistakably, was standing on the parapet, looking down with clasped hands. For fully five minutes she stood motionless, and then she glided away—disappeared mysteriously.

Sometimes her cries were heard echoing through the deserted room; but more frequently she was silent, standing motionless with clasped hands.

During a period of fifteen years she had appeared at long or short intervals, and during all that time the house remained unoccupied.

The circumstance that gave rise to the appearance of the "ghost," in the first instance, was the mysterious death of Dame Ellinor, wife of Harry Bertram, nearly a hundred years before.

She had been found dead in her bed in the Ebony Room; her face was discolored, and there were suspicious purple marks on her throat. People said that her husband, in a fit of jealous fury, had strangled her; but his well known affection for her, no less than her truth and goodness, and his generally even amiable temper, disarmed suspicion; still for several years Dame Ellinor's spirit was said to revisit the Ebony Room on the anniversary of her death.

As time passed by, and no startling calamity befel the Bertrams, people forgot all about the ghost.

Harry Bertram's great-grandson was master of the Grange—a Harry too with something of the amiability and jealousy of his ancestor. He had been twice married. His first wife, a good commonplace woman, who had brought him a tolerable fortune, had died peacefully in her bed, of consumption, when Roland, their only child, was about ten years old. Harry Bertram sent his boy to school, shut up the Grange, and went abroad. For five years he travelled no one knew whither, and at the end of that time he returned with a young wife.

She was a beautiful creature, with shy wild eyes, and nervous little hands that she clasped entreatingly when trying to give her directions to the servants in broken English.

Mrs. Meekins, who had been the first

Mrs. Bertram's maid, and nursed her with care and affection through her long illness, and had remained at the Grange as housekeeper during the master's absence, felt a great compassion for the young bride, with her sweet winning ways and childish innocence.

Meekins became her young mistress's personal attendant, and Rosalie, the French maid who had accompanied Mrs. Bertram from Paris, took her departure, not finding life at Thistleton Grange at all to her liking.

It certainly was rather dreary. Harry Bertram was strangely altered; he refused either to make calls or receive visitors, he was gloomy and taciturn, and never seemed to be contented for a single moment if Marie, his wife, were out of his sight. She, poor child, was shy and nervous; but, if any trouble weighed upon her and perplexed her, she kept it to herself.

Not even to faithful Meekins who was more like a mother than a servant, did she utter a single murmur; only sometimes she shivered and glanced round with an expression of vague dread in her eyes, as if she expected to see something uncanny in the shadowy corners of the Ebony Room; for it was one of Harry Bertram's innumerable whims that his wife should occupy that apartment.

One night in the late autumn, when the wind was sighing through the leafless trees, the whole household at Thistleton Grange was aroused by a wild ringing shriek, such as rarely issues from human lips.

Meekins was out of bed in a moment, and flew instinctively to her mistress's room. It was empty, and a fierce gust of wind from some open casement blew out her candle as she left the apartment in search of Mr. Bertram.

In the moonlight she saw him rush down the staircase, an indescribable look of terror in his eyes, and she followed him across the great hall, out into the chilly damp October air, round the west angle of the house—and then she stood still, terror-stricken.

On the smooth gravel lay Marie Bertram, a shapeless white heap, her face turned towards the sky. Beside her knelt her husband, with clasped hands, not daring to touch her, scarcely venturing to look. As Meekins and the other servants drew near he roused himself as if from a trance.

"She was walking in her sleep—she got out on to the roof somehow, and, before I could overtake her, she fell over!" he said huskily. "But she's not dead, she cannot be—my little Marie—my love! Hush, Meekins—you must not wake her! The doctors say it might be fatal to rouse her suddenly! Who dares to say she is dead—my darling? She is sleeping—she is sleeping!"

Very tenderly he lifted her in his arms and carried her to her room, laid her gently on her bed, and, with hushed breath and finger on lip, enforced silence.

"See—she is not even bruised, thank Heaven—her lovely face has not a scratch!" he whispered to Meekins. "Now go away—I must watch my darling myself. She must see no one else here when she awakes, or she will be frightened!"

And he bent down and kissed one of the little lifeless hands that lay on the counterpane.

Meekins left the room without a word: how could she tell him that his young wife would never open her eyes in this world again? She was dead, poor child; the terrible fall had broken her neck, and death in all probability had been instantaneous.

Mrs. Meekins was a sensible woman; she dispatched her husband, who acted as butler, for Doctor Richardson, not so much for the dead as for the living, for the look on Mr. Bertram's face frightened her.

She also sent a message to Mr. Broadbent, the Vicar, wrote a few hasty lines to Mr. Roland, telling him what had occurred, and then, accompanied by the doctor, who arrived without a moment's delay, returned to the Ebony Room.

"Hush—gently! It is kind of you to call Richardson; but I don't think there is anything for you to do here," whispered Mr. Bertram. "Thank Heaven, my darling is so light, she fell like a feather! She must not see you here when she awakes; it would frighten her!"

"Come outside and tell me all about it," said the doctor, with a glance at the bed. "Mrs. Bertram will not require me, but I should like to know how it all happened."

"Sit there, Meekins, in the shadow, and, if she should move ever so slightly, come and tell me. Mind you don't speak to her, for your life!" said Mr. Bertram, as he followed the doctor reluctantly from the room.

"Your wife was a somnambulist, Mr. Bertram?" said the doctor.

"Yes, she is. When only just recovering from a long illness, she received a terrible shock; she was awakened out of her sleep by a cry of fire, and only escaped from the house with the utmost difficulty. I did not know the details of the affair, and, unfortunately, a few days after we came here, I took her out on the leads to show her the view—you know it is the finest in the whole country of Warwick.

"She said it was very beautiful, and then burst into tears. It was a long time before I could persuade her to tell me why; but at last she said she was frightened—she had escaped from her burning home by the roof.

"Twice since then she has attempted to get out to the leads in her sleep, and I had the trap-door, as I thought, securely fastened; but to-day some one was up there seeing to the chimney-pots, and left the door unsecured.

"Unfortunately I was very weary and slept heavily. She was gone some moments before I missed her, and I only reached the roof in time to see her step over! Oh, great Heaven, if she should have been killed—my Marie—my darling!"

So far Mr. Bertram had spoken calmly and collectedly, without either excitement or fear in his voice; but at the very idea of his wife's death his eyes rolled wildly and he clutched nervously at his dressing-gown.

"It was a terrible fall—between ninety and a hundred feet, I should say. Suppose, Mr. Bertram, your wife should be injured?" said the doctor gently.

"Oh, no; there is not a bruise or a scratch—she is sleeping quite calmly! She is so light, my Marie—she feels like a feather!"

"Dear Mr. Bertram, it is as well always to be prepared for the worst."

"The worst—what do you mean, Richardson? You don't mean to say my wife is injured—killed? The truth, doctor—the truth! Is—is—my wife dead?"

"Yes, Mr. Bertram, she is; her neck was broken by that terrible fall!"

"Dead—her neck broken! Marie!"

And, without another word, he fell senseless at the doctor's feet.

* * * * * *

Mr. Bertram never really recovered from the terrible shock of that night.

Brain fever ensued, which brought him to Death's door. Neither Mrs. Meekins, who watched over him with the tenderest care, nor his son, who shared her anxious vigils, had ever hoped to see him about again.

However, he rallied, and seemed in a measure reconciled to the terrible affliction that had befallen him; but after a few years he began to fail suddenly, and died without any specified disease—the death of his wife had broken his heart. Almost his last words to his son were—

"Keep Meekins always—never let her leave the Grange; she loved my darling!"

So Meekins had stayed on, though young Roland found the solitude and associations of the place intolerable, and left soon after his father's death.

Then the ghost appeared—frequently at first, more seldom after a few months; but always the same—the white-robed figure of Marie Bertram looking over the parapet, standing at the upper windows, or hurrying noiselessly up and down the wide staircase.

Fifteen years passed away, and Roland Bertram, like his father, married a Frenchwoman; but before he brought his bride home to the Grange, he went himself, quietly, without giving any warning, just to see if the rumors that reached him from time to time had any truth in them. Mrs. Meekins received him gladly, and assured him that it was all idle superstition.

"Mr. Roland dear," she said earnestly, "I believe your poor step-mother is a saint in heaven; and what could induce her to ramble about a damp and dusty old house? If any one was to see her, surely it would be me, seeing that I worshipped the very ground she walked on, and laid her in her coffin with my own hands."

Meekins's words were re-assuring, still Roland Bertram resolved to judge for himself.

He occupied the Ebony Room, and, without the slightest anticipation of being disturbed by any supernatural visitant, he fell asleep.

In the middle of the night however he awoke to find a white-robed figure standing at the foot of the bed, looking at him earnestly.

He sat up, and would have sprung out of bed, but the figure glided quietly away up the stairs and out on to the roof. He followed, trembling in every limb, bathed in cold perspiration, borne along by an impulse he could not resist. For a few moments the figure stood on the roof, then passed down again noiselessly, looked into the Ebony Room, and vanished suddenly.

Roland Bertram dressed himself, pulled up the blinds, and sat by the window till morning. Without saying a single word about what he had seen, he left Thistleton Grange early in the morning, and wrote to Mr. Jessamer, his lawyer and agent, telling him to sell the place at any price, but on the condition that Mrs. Meekins was to be allowed to remain in the house.

* * * * * *

After a good deal of forcible reasoning on the one side, and of rather feeble resistance on the other, it was at last decided that Edward Allen should become the occupier of Thistleton Grange.

Mrs. Meekins was willing to remain as housekeeper, and undertook to provide two other useful trustworthy servants from Warwick, who had never heard anything about the White Lady. As for Reuben Clegg, the under-gardner, who slept in the stables, and declared that he had seen the ghost on the roof twice within a week, he was sent away in disgrace.

The trap-door was securely locked; Mrs. Meekins herself had the key, and it was simply impossible for any one to get out on to the roof.

That was the conviction of the housekeeper and Mr. Jessamer, but Reuben still maintained stoutly that "them as went out on roofs and looked over parapets in their grave-clothes was independent of locks and keys;" so he was sent away, and a new gardener engaged, who did not mind if there were a dozen White Ladies, so long as they confined themselves to the Grange and did not interfere with his department.

Maggie and Edward were married in June, and went to Switzerland for their honeymoon.

They had planned only a six weeks' tour; but Mr. Jessamer, who had taken a sudden fancy to the bride, resolved that her new home should be in perfect order, and kept on writing to them to defer their return a little longer, as the Grange was not quite ready.

It was the beginning of September before they were informed that all the preparations were complete, and that they might fix an early day for their return.

Without an hour's unnecessary delay they set out for home, and arrived at Muddleton one glorious September evening, just as the trees were beginning to don a mellow amber hue, and the last load of wheat was safely carried to the granaries.

It was a pleasant home coming. Mr. Jessamer and Aunt Patience met them at the station.

Mrs. Meekins—a hale cheerful old lady—and two sturdy rosy-cheeked lasses, were at the hall-door, with smiles and kindly greetings.

A cheerful fire burned on the low tiled hearth of the dining-room; lights, flowers, and the chirping of a canary, gave the old place a homely air; nothing indeed had been omitted that could add to the comfort and elegance of their new home. Miss Patience had planned, Uncle George had performed, and the result was simply perfection.

"You never told me what a delightful home you were bringing me to! I fancied Thistleton Grange was a gloomy, rather tumble-down old-fashioned place," said Maggie, as she and her husband went up the broad staircase, preceded by Aunt Patience. "Oh, Edward, it is all like a dream!"

"A pleasant dream, I hope, dearest! And you have no misgivings about the White Lady, now that you see the house?"

"Not the slightest! How often have I told you that I don't believe in ghosts?" returned Maggie merrily. "Besides, the Grange does not look haunted, there's nothing dismal or melancholy about it. What pleasure could a ghost have in walking on such pretty carpets, or staring at such delightful wall-papers? I do believe, Edward, you have been laughing at me all the time about this White Lady of Thistleton!"

"No, indeed, darling! Several people whose veracity I have no reason to doubt have assured me that they saw her. I have not seen her, neither has Uncle George, nor Mrs. Meekins, and I hope we shall remain in the ignorance which, in this instance, is bliss. Tell me, Maggie, suppose you should see her, what would you do?"

"Give myself a good shake and a pinch, for of course I should be only dreaming," replied Maggie gaily.

"Then you are not in the least afraid, dearest, of this strange mysterious visitor who loves to walk on the leads?"

"Afraid—no! Why should I be, when I have you to take care of me?"

And Edward Allen drew his wife's head on to his shoulder and stroked her hair lovingly.

It was a comfort to him to find Maggie so brave and confident. If she were predisposed to see strange visions, no doubt they would appear in plenty; but a little woman who promised to give herself "a good shake and a pinch" when she fancied she saw an apparition was not very likely to be troubled in that way.

* * * * * *

Twelve months passed away without anything occurring to disturb the perfect peaceful happiness of Maggie and Edward Allen.

Business went on smoothly; the Grange was charming, both as a summer and a winter residence. It was near enough to Muddleton to be convenient, and sufficiently far away to free them from promiscuous callers and the gossip that so freely circulates over afternoon tea.

Maggie was not looking quite so well or strong as could be wished; her face had a worn look, and her eyes a wistful troubled expression that puzzled both Aunt Patience and Mrs. Meekins.

The latter served the new mistress of the Grange with as much devotion as she had displayed towards Marie Bertram. It was some consolation to have such a steady, sensible woman as housekeeper, for the stories about the White Lady were as prevalent as ever, and then Susan the housemaid persisted that she had seen her at the hall-door one night when it was very well known that Susan was, or ought to have been, sound asleep in bed.

Certainly Mrs. Allen was not the bright healthy-looking little woman she had been when she came to Muddleton; and when, with the first May buds, her baby came, they all hoped to find a great change in the young mother.

Instead of recovering her health and spirits however, poor Maggie grew worse. All day she would sit with her baby in her arms; half the night she spent watching its tiny delicate face, and, as a natural consequence, she was haggard and hollow-eyed herself in the morning.

Edward was sorely troubled; he scarcely knew how to account for his wife's altered appearance.

Her physical health was fairly good; and though Doctor Richardson maintained that there was something weighing on her mind, Edward insisted that there could be nothing whatever.

At the end of a month the baby died, and then the whole secret came out; Maggie could not keep it back any longer.

It was the White Lady. She had often come and stood at the foot of the bed, and once Maggie had ventured to follow her a little way; but she became frightened, and crept back to bed, and the end of it was that she entreated her husband to take her away.

"Let us go and live anywhere—anywhere out of this dreadful house, Edward! Indeed it is not fancy; I have seen her many, many times! Oh, I think I shall die if I stay here!"

"Why did you not tell me this sooner, darling? Why have you allowed it to make you ill, without confiding in me?" cried Edward. "It was not kind of you, Maggie!"

"I was ashamed, dear, after all my boasting, and I really thought it was fancy for a long time; but now I know it was not," said Maggie humbly. "Edward dear, will you take away?"

"Certainly—this very moment! You must come and stay at Stoneleigh till we decide what had better be done. I will not have you remain here another night, my poor long-suffering little pet! You have been very brave and patient, but just a little foolish too. However, you have suffered enough already, so I will not add any reproaches. I wonder what Uncle George will say?"

Mr. Jessamer was angry, indignant, incredulous. He could not understand it at all.

Of course Maggie only said what she thought, but women were full of fancies.

"The long and the short of it is, Edward, I must go and stay at the Grange myself," he declared. "Until I see this White Lady I cannot believe in her existence—nay, more, I shall want to feel as well as see—I am hopelessly sceptical. You and Maggie stay here for a week, and I'll go to the Grange and see if I cannot fathom the mystery."

"Oh, please don't, Uncle George!" cried Maggie.

But Mr. Jessamer was resolute; his honor was at stake—his reputation, so to speak—for he had boldly denied the existence of the ghost, and had pointed to the fact of his nephew's continued residence at the Grange as proof positive.

Now, if Edward and Maggie were to leave, he would become the laughing-stock of Muddleton, and that was more than he could calmly endure.

That very evening, after dinner, he took his cigar-case and his evening paper and started for the Grange, vowing to sleep, or rather lie awake, in the Ebony Room, and interview any visitor that appeared.

The next day it was impossible to gather from his demeanor whether he had seen anything or not.

He was rather graver than usual, but that might have been because there was some pressing business on hand just then. On the second morning also he was silent, but on the third he burst triumphantly into the parlor at Stoneleigh, while they were still at breakfast.

"Well," they all cried together—"what has happened?"

"I have laid the ghost for ever!" he replied, rubbing his hands gleefully. "Now I will give you three guesses each to tell me who and what it was!"

"Please, Uncle George, don't keep us in suspense; tell us what it was," said Maggie wistfully, her face very pale and her hands trembling. "I am sure I saw somebody!"

"Doubtless—and so did I; but it was only poor old Meekins walking in her sleep! The first night I followed her up to the top of the house, not knowing in the least what to make of it; but, when she opened the trap-door, I noticed she used a key—that seemed of the earth earthly. Then my candle went out, so I could not follow her downstairs. The second night I was wiser; I tracked her to the door of her room. This night, or rather morning, I put down my lamp upon the floor of the hall and awakened her, and really I fancied for a few minutes that I had scared the poor woman out of her wits. I sent off at once for Richardson, and told him all the circumstances, and he declared it was the most natural thing in the world. The poor woman was so terrified on the night of Mrs. Bertram's death, awakened so suddenly out of her sleep, that she never quite got over it. It has weighed on her mind ever since, and she confesses that she has never ceased to dream of it. Richardson declares that it is not wonderful, that he has heard of similar instances of sleep-walking; the only marvel is that she never tripped over the parapet and broke her neck. And that is the solution of the mystery—that's the end of the ghost of Thistleton Grange!"

For a few days Mr. Jessamer was quite a hero and then the excitement quietly died.

Mrs. Meekins, whose health was greatly shaken by the shock, left Muddleton for a time, and when she returned it was to live with Miss Patience at Stoneleigh. Maggie and Edward went back to the Grange, and have lived there happily ever since.

They are living there now, surrounded by merry children, whom Uncle George and Aunt Patience spoil outrageously. Mrs. Meekins too insists on having one or two of them always at Stoneleigh.

The old lady never cares to go up to the Grange, and there is nothing the children love more than to gather round her and listen to her marvellous fairy-tales, and amusing stories of "pixies" and "good people."

One subject however is strictly forbidden; Edward Allen never wishes his children to hear the sad story of the White Lady of Thistleton Grange.

"ETHEL," asked a gentle mother of her daughter, as the fair young girl sat down to a late breakfast Tuesday, "did George leave any package for me last evening?" Ethel blushed and said falteringly, "Why no, mamma! Why made you ask?" "Oh, nothing, only I heard him say at the door as he said good-bye, 'Now, here is one more for your mother,' and I didn't know but it was that pattern for lace lambrequins that his mother has promised me." Ethel said nothing.

Their Last Waltz.

BY S. U. W.

"YOU do not know how horribly wretched I feel at the thought of leaving England and you. It seems like death, and you do not care enough to look even sorry!"

The speaker is a good-looking young man, endowed with a pair of remarkably effective gray eyes, which just now are pleading very eloquently for their owner—eyes the influence of which most people find it difficult to resist; and yet the young lady—for, of course, it is a young lady—on whom they are fixed smiles carelessly, opens her fan, and contemplates the courtly group of knights and dames painted thereon, as if the gray eyes were not pleading, or sad, or reproachful at all, but like her own, calmly smiling.

"Do you know I sail the day after to-morrow?" he continues, desperately.

"So soon?" she says, raising her fan so that her face is hidden from him. "Well, I hope you will have a safe and pleasant voyage."

"How cold you are, Gladys! You scarcely seem to care whether it is safe or not! As to being pleasant, you might as well hope the earth will stand still!"

"Captain Talbot does not intend me to stand still, anyway," returns the girl, lightly. "Have you no partner for this dance?"

And then she glides away, with her partner's arm round her waist, and Victor Lorrimer stands looking gloomily, wretchedly after her.

The clock in the hall has struck 12, and still the feet of the merry dancers trip lightly, still the tender nothings, the evergreen compliments, the time-worn ball-room utterances, flow unceasingly.

As Victor Lorrimer stands moodily against the door watching Gladys Dormer, scraps of conversation fall upon his ear.

"I can't do much more of this sort of thing," observes a stout gentleman to a thin one who is standing close to Mr. Lorrimer, "Leave it for the young ones, eh?"

The music ceases; the waltz comes to an end.

Lorrimer's gray eyes follow reproachfully the girl who has just passed him on the arm of Captain Talbot.

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"This is our dance at last."

Gladys Dormer looks up.

"Ah, yes," she says; "so it is."

"As this is probably the last time we shall ever dance together, let us begin and make the most of it," says Lorrimer.

"You will have plenty of dancing during your voyage," observes the girl, in a low voice. "I have heard such glowing accounts of the amusement on board ship, and the charming girls who, by some extraordinary coincidence, always seem to congregate there."

"Do you suppose"—indignantly—"that I shall even look at a girl? I shall hate them all because they are not you."

She laughs.

"You would not laugh if you knew how wretched I am," cries the young man.

"Do you think you monopolize the entire wretchedness of the community?" she asks, raising her tell-tale eyes to his. "Do you think you are the only person who——"

"Gladys, what do you mean?"—excitedly.

"Nothing. How badly you are dancing: we only just escaped a collision."

"Come into the library; I must have five minutes' talk with you away from all this noise and glitter."

"It would be much wiser to stay here."

"Wisdom to the winds; remember this is my last dance."

She resists no longer, and so they go, these two young hearts beating wildly, lovingly, wretchedly for each other.

"I have been watching you nearly all the evening," says Lorrimer, sitting down beside her; "and in the coming years I shall think of you as you look to-night, more beautiful than any other woman to me. I am selfish enough to wish you were not so fair, so sought after; there might then be a little more hope for me."

"Your wish will soon be gratified," she returns, with a sigh: "beauty and admiration come to an end more quickly than anything else except happiness."

"I suppose I shall hear some fine day that you are married. I shall be always dreading it."

"You need not dread it; you will not hear it."

"My darling, I must not ask you to wait for me; but if I thought you cared just a little how things went with me in the new country; if I thought Gladys Dormer would give me a welcome when I came back, I would work day and night, and bring a true, faithful heart to lay at her feet."

"Gladys Dormer will be waiting to welcome you," she says, very unsteadily.

"Do you mean that?"

The gray eyes and the brown ones meet in one long, steadfast look.

"You know I mean it," she answers.

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"No, no, Lorrimer, my boy, it is all ridiculous nonsense," says Mr. Dormer, fixing his spectacles more firmly on his nose; "don't you see it is? Look at the thing from a common sense point of view. Here is Gladys, nineteen years of age, and you twenty-three, both young people with your lives before you. Your worthy uncle sends for you to join him in Australia, and a remarkably fortunate fellow you are to get the chance, I can tell you. Where would be the sense of fettering you and my daughter with a long, indefinite engagement? Make up your minds, and give up the idea. Depend upon it you will find your wife on the other side of the water, and Gladys will find her husband on this. What's that about broken hearts? Broken fiddlesticks! Hearts don't break so easily, take my word for it. I say, go to your new life free as air, and leave my child free too."

"Nothing will change me," says the young fellow, doggedly. "If I don't see her for twenty years I shall never look at another woman."

"Well, then, by your own argument, there is no need to bind either of you by an engagement; you can be true and wait for each other without, don't you see?"

"I am sure of myself," he returns, confidently; "but how can I be sure of her?"

"Why, you can't, you know," says Mr. Dormer. "That is the peculiarity of women; you never can be sure of them. Being engaged has nothing to do with it.

"I may see her to say good-bye?"

"Bless my soul, yes, of course you may; only remember, no engagement—both free as air!"

"And faithful as Heaven!" cries Lorrimer, raising his handsome head as if he were registering a vow.

"Ah," murmurs Mr. Dormer, "just so!"

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Twenty beautiful, golden summers and sad, cheerless winters have passed away, in which hearts have been exchanged, broken, killed; red lips have smiled, quivered, and grown pale; bright eyes faded and become dim; sunny hair streaked with silver, and yet during these twenty years the birds have sung as sweetly and merrily, the flowers bloomed as gaily, the sun shone as brightly, as if heartaches and sorrow, sighing and death, were unknown.

There is to be a grand reception to-night at the house of the fashionable Mrs. Vallaise, one of the reigning beauties of the season. That is her carriage stopping now.

"Is Miss Dormer at home?" asks the footman, as the door of a handsome house in Kensington is opened in response to his ring.

Yes, Miss Dormer is at home. Mrs. Vallaise alights, and is ushered into a luxurious drawing-room and the presence of Gladys Dormer.

"Auntie, darling," says the younger lady affectionately, "as a very great favor to us, Herbert and I want you to come to my reception this evening. You will, dear, won't you?"

Miss Dormer smiles.

"Don't ask me, Mildred. I never go to large parties, you know; my day for that kind of thing is over."

"No, no, it is not; we shall take no refusal; we have a little surprise in store for you."

Miss Dormer looks up quickly.

"A surprise," she says, slowly, "for me?"

"Yes; but I shall not tell you what it is."

"I am not used to surprises; I should be glad if you would break it, my dear."

Her voice falters, and she grasps the back of a chair for support with hands that tremble.

"Why, auntie, you seem quite upset! It is nothing to trouble you, only that you will meet an old friend—someone you knew years and years ago. Can you guess who?"

Surely, yes: for she knows that the only friend she has waited for all these long, silent years has come back at last.

"Is it Mr. Lorrimer?"

She speaks calmly, unemotionally, and listens to her own voice as if it were someone else's.

"Yes. You will be glad to see him?"

"Very glad."

"Then I may tell Herbert you have promised to come?"

"Yes; I will come."

For ten minutes after her niece has left her, Miss Dormer stands looking into the fire.

"Twenty years!" she says, and raises her eyes to the mirror. "What a change he will see! Will he be glad that the beauty and attractiveness have disappeared, I wonder—as glad as he said he should be? He will have altered, too, no doubt; but if his heart has been as true as mine——"

She buries her face in her hands, and a sob breaks from her quivering lips.

* * * * * *

In a brilliantly-lit house a gay throng has assembled, and the cry is, "Still they come."

Mrs. Vallaise's reception is the attraction of the hour; and some of England's fairest and greatest are present.

On a sofa, shaded by Oriental curtains and palms, sits Gladys Dormer. Her eyes are fixed upon the entrance through which the flirting, laughing crowd pours.

At last they rest on a tall, pleasant-looking man with a smile on his face, who looks around in a slightly mystified way, as if in search of a familiar face among such a number of strange ones.

His host is with him. After he has talked to Mrs. Vallaise for a few minutes, and pushed his fingers through his hair—an old trick of his when that hair was bright and brown and thick—the two gentlemen stroll towards the sofa.

"Here is Miss Dormer," says Mr. Vallaise. "At least you know her. She will be able to tell you the fate of most of your old friends."

"Dormer?" returned his companion, looking down and bowing. "I am sure I ought to remember. Let me see. Oh, of course!" smiling with great relief. "I should think I do remember! Why, it must be twenty years since I saw you. I really don't think I should have known you."

His host has disappeared, so he takes a seat beside his old friend.

"What a stranger one feels coming back after so long an absence!" he continues. "Everything is so changed. No one seems to remember me, Miss Dormer."

"I remember you," says Gladys, and she smiles in a gentle, pathetic way.

"Ah!" he returns; "that is very good of you. I am sure I have forgotten half the people I used to know, so I cannot complain of them forgetting me. How is your father?"

"Dead!" replies Gladys; "he died years ago!"

"Ah! of course, I forgot—how time flies! So you are left alone and unmarried! How is that? What can my sex have been thinking about to allow it?"—with a pleasant laugh. "Why, when I went away you were considered a beauty. You may think I am flattering you, but you really were a very pretty girl indeed!"

"Thank you!"

There is something in her voice very like tears, that causes him to look down at her quickly.

"I meant that remark for a compliment," he says. "I am afraid, with my usual clumsiness, I made hash of it!"

"No; not at all. I am pleased you remember me as I was."

"Of course I do. Why, I believe, now I think of those old days, that we had quite a 'boy-and-girl' flirtation, exchanged vows of eternal love and devotion, and all that sort of thing, you know; but I have no doubt you had so many flirtations that one soon passed out of your mind?"

And so Victor Lorrimer drifts on into bygone reminiscences, and inquires after the various acquaintances he left behind him so many years ago; and the woman beside him answers all his questions with the gentle smile on her face, and the dumb pathos in her eyes.

"Fate has dealt kindly with me," he says at length. "I left England a poor man, and return a rich one—rich in all ways; but most of all in——There!" suddenly breaking off; "I never can say exactly what I feel, so I won't try now. I will introduce her to you; she will be here directly—my future wife, I mean. I know how pleased she will be to meet any old friend of mine. She is so young and pretty and charming, Miss Dormer"—the old infatuated love-light coming into his gray eyes—"that I shall pass the remainder of my life wondering what she can see in an old fogey of forty-three to love."

"I hope you will be very happy," says Gladys, and then she looks up at him. "Will you bring her to see me some day? I am so tired now; I think I must go home."

"Ah! when people get into years, like you and I, these gay doings fatigue them. We cannot stand it as we used to do."

"No; not quite as we used to. Good-bye!"

"Good bye!"

She lays her hand for a moment in his.

"I hope your life may always be as full of sunshine as it is now," she says. "You will remember that I said so, won't you?"

"Thank you—thank you! Good-bye again, Miss Dormer."

"Going, auntie? Oh, how tired you look, dear! Herbert, do take care of her."

"I don't want taking care of," Gladys says gently. "I want to go home."

"That sounds very pathetic," she cries. "I don't know what to say."

"Yes, dear, you shall; and I will come round quite early in the morning and look after you." Anxiously—"You are not sorry you came?"

"No; I am not sorry."

* * * * * *

She wanted "to go home," and she had her desire. It was in the cold, misty morning that they found her quite dead, her head resting on the table beside a faded bunch of violets, a little enamel pencil that had once been attached to a ball programme and a curl of bright brown hair.

"Sweet is death which puts an end to pain."

THE CHINESE BABY.—No sooner is a Chinese boy born into the world than his father proceeds to write down eight characters or words, each set of two representing respectively the exact hour, day, month and year of his birth. These are handed by the father to a fortune teller, whose business it is to carefully draw up from them a certain book of fate, generally spoken of as the boy's pat-tas, or "eight characters."

Herein the fortune-teller describes the good and evil which the boy is likely to meet with in after life, and the means to be adopted in order to secure the one and avert the other.

In order to understand something of the value of this document, we must glance at the Chinese method of reckoning time. There are only twelve Chinese hours to our twenty-four. Beginning with 11 P. M. to 1 A. M., which is their first hour, the names are rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, cock, dog and pig.

As everybody is supposed to partake more or less of the animal at whose hour he is born, it appears obvious that, e. g., it would never do to send a rabbit boy to the school of a tiger schoolmaster. Hence the necessity of consulting the pat-tas of both parties before entering upon any kind of agreement.

It is a fact that it is thus referred to on every important occasion.

Should anyone ask me, what is the first thing in religion I would reply humility.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A memorial comes from the governor of a district in China who testifies to the presence of swarms of rats, which for some two years past have destroyed all the grass in the land, and have so undermined the ground with their burrows that mounted men are exposed to serious risks. For this reason it has become necessary to alter the routes of the government courier service in several of the postal lines. The old story of Dick Whittington and his cat seems more worthy of credence after reading this account.

Some years ago, Mme. Bernhardt, the French actress, paid a visit to Copenhagen, and she naturally wished to go to Elsinore to see Hamlet's grave. She was told that Hamlet, being a mythical creature, had no grave. That mattered little to Mme. Bernhardt. There ought to be a grave and one must be made. To suit her desire, a heap of stones was erected near a ravine on a woody slope behind the Castle of Elsinore. She paid her visit and was content. Ever since then English tourists have visited the spot, chipped away of course pieces of the stone and hurried them off as mementoes of the Prince of Denmark.

The brutality with which newly married people are treated by their jesting friends is constantly receiving fresh illustrations. "At a recent Boston wedding," says a paper of that city, "a couple of sportive ushers discovered the train on which the bridal pair were to leave town and what baggage they had. Driving swiftly to the station they confided their plan to the baggage master and, with his connivance, they affixed to each handle of the trunks of the bride and groom an enormous bow of white satin ribbon. If the groom did not blaspheme when he saw the decorated trunks deposited in the hall of the hotel to which he went he may take rank with Job for patience."

In Paris the dog-day campaign against dogs has continued with fury for the last six weeks. Hundreds of bow-wow tramps are weekly taken to the *fourriere* and suffocated. Apropos of this a correspondent telegraphs: "The streets of Paris offer a strange sight. The Champ Elysees are filled up with a perfect cobweb of chains, cords and leashes that constitute the regulation bow-wow leading strings. At one end of the leading string is a pretty chamber maid or venerable fat cook or a slim *valet de chambre* or a portly footman. At the other end is the master or mistress bow-wow, St. Bernards, great woolly Pyrenees dogs, chocolate or black or white poodles, bulldogs, dachshunds, and so on down the scale to microscopic black-and-tans."

The fund for distribution among New York city's indigent blind persons was given out a few days since at the office of the Charity Board, Eleventh St. and Third avenue. This year $19,169 was appropriated for the purpose, and, as the inspectors reported 479 deserving cases, there was just $40 for each. The money was doled out in $20 gold pieces by Superintendent William Blake. The pensioners seemed very grateful, and many affecting scenes were witnessed as they were led up to Mr. Blake. The Superintendent knew them all and had a kind word for each. These pensioners are under the observation of the department at all times, and any violation of the law by them forfeits their right to a share of the fund.

A charming French Duchess, so goes the story, had recently promised to be present at the festivity for some benevolent purpose at the Trouville Casino. Being rather behind time the lady put her gloves on while driving, and never noticed till she stood in the full blaze of the Casino drawing-room that to her black-and-white silk costume she had put on one white and one black glove. It appears that her maid had left two pairs of gloves ready for her mistress to choose from, and that the Duchess, in her hurry, had taken one of each pair. The mistake, however, could not be undone, and the gratifying result was that at the next fashionable assembly all the ladies at Trouville wore a glove of different color on each hand—a costume that has become so general that all the ladies at Trouville have adopted it.

Clark Reitmeyer, of Lewisburg, Pa., was in love with a Chicago girl, and they "corresponded." But the correspondence stopped many months ago because the young man had not received an answer to his "last letter." He was too high strung to ask an explanation. Last week he received the answer to his last letter, and a note of explanation accompanied it. A commercial traveler, while riding on a Maine railroad, purchased a magazine published in Chicago; between the pages he discovered the letter addressed to Reitmeyer. It was sewed fast. It had a stamp upon it but no postmark. The drummer was mystified, and upon reflection sent on the letter as directed. It seems that the young woman worked in a bindery and that she had placed the letter between the pages for safe keeping. Forgetting that she had not mailed it she concluded that her lover had left her. The correspondence has been resumed.

As threshing separates the wheat from the chaff, so does affliction purify virtue.

Our Young Folks.

SPANGLE AND PATCH

BY S. S.

A FINE young cockerel found a fat and juicy slug in the poultry-yard. He eyed it with satisfaction, and was going to gobble it up in a trice, when a brother cockerel spied the treasure in his beak, and gave chase.

Although my story is not a very long one, for convenience in telling it my two heroes must have names; so I will call the first bird Spangle and the second Patch.

Spangle held to his prize bravely, and ran as fast as his long chicken legs would carry him, but not being able to open his beak, Patch had the advantage.

If he continued his flight, Patch must inevitably run him down. I cannot be sure that he reasoned in this way, but it is just possible that under his comb was some thought of this description.

He could not swallow his slug without first getting a chance to recover his breath; but he was quite determined that Patch should not have it. He dropped it, and then turned quickly around and gave fight, head down, feathers set up in a ruff around it, wings outspread, saying as plainly as any creature of the feathered race could without language—

"Come on, then, if you call yourself a cockerel!"

And Patch did "come on," for the fine fat slug that he meant to have—that is if he could get it—laid well in the rear of Spangle, and was only to be reached by his removal.

So he too set up his feathers and flew at Spangle; they touched beaks and flew around and around, making a commotion and raising a dust.

If the slug had been nimble now was the time to make off, but one cannot change one's nature even in an emergency. Moreover the slug may have felt a little gratified at being the primary cause of all this disturbance; for some people like to feel themselves of sufficient importance to be fought over.

Possibly he had a little curiosity to see which of the pretty equally matched birds would win in the end. At any rate, there he laid, as sluggish as ever.

A turkey strutted up from the far corner of the poultry yard to see what all the commotion was about.

"Gobble, gobble, gobble! I won't interfere, but I should like to see fair play," was all he said; but his eye fell on the slug, and he understood the position at once.

"Just to prevent any further quarrelling of the same kind," he said to himself, and, opening his bill, he gobbled down the juicy tid-bit, and marched off again more quickly than he had come.

"What business had he to come here and draw off our attentions from each other?" cried Patch, letting his feathers fall.

"Just what I want to know," said Spangle; "I'll be ready for you again in a second; we haven't finished yet."

In the meantime he took a glance behind him just to assure himself that the prize he was defending was all right, when lo! and behold! the very piece of soil upon which the slug had reposed, ready to gratify the appetite of the victor, knew the juicy morsel no more; and the turkey walking away in the distance, highly satisfied with himself in particular, and all the poultry kind in general, looked the picture of innocence.

"My friend," said Spangle to Patch, in haste to make the best of the misfortune which had befallen them, "the very bone of contention is removed; we had better shake claws and forget our late tussel."

"With all my heart," returned Patch, "and the next time we have anything to fight for let us keep clear of all spectators."

I feel inclined to imitate the Duchess in Wonderland, and say, "The moral of this is——"

But there, if a moral needs to be pointed the story is better without it.

THE STERN ROCK.—A stern rock stood in its hard and desolate loneliness; and around it were bright flowers and lovely trees in the midst of a lovely valley.

Often the little flowers below looked up at it in sorrowful wonder.

"We would gladly come to you," they said among themselves, "but you are too hard, and our roots could not fasten in you. We should wither and die if we came too near you."

The birds sang together in the trees, and were so happy that they hardly heeded what the flowers had said, but one little tom-tit whispered to a prim butter cup: "You are quite right; that rock is most hard and unfeeling. I tried once to build my nest there, but there was not even a nook to shelter in. And it is dangerous also," continued the tom-tit, "for I remember that once as I was flying round it, trying to find a soft place, a huge eagle swooped down upon it, and would have eaten me up if I had not quickly flown back to the dear old trees out of harm's way."

"I have lived a long time in the world," said the loving ivy, which encircled an old dying oak tree. "I can tell you my story from the very beginning. When I was quite a little shoot, I ran along the ground, and I saw the oak-tree so near me that I at once began to climb over it. That is a very long time ago, and now the oak is old and faded, but I will never desert it, and when it dies I will crown it in everlasting beauty. But as to this rock, I have long watched it, and there is a soft spot in which I can take root."

The flowers and the birds all wondered at these words, but the ivy was in earnest, and it sent forth one of its shoots, which tried its best to take root in the hard rock. The first shoot withered, but the ivy tried again and put out another, which also failed; but at last the third shoot quietly felt its way, until, to its great joy, the gentle earth surrounded it, and its roots sank softly into the ground.

Many years passed away, and the once desolate rock was covered with the everlasting beauty of the green ivy, and the birds built their pretty nests in its branches while the flowers looked up with great joy that all the sternness had gone.

—A. M. B.

BOYISH FREAKS.

WHAT a strange world of his own is that in which a boy lives. His parents he can see are necessary; but they hold inconvenient theories respecting cleanliness and education, which clash sadly with his notions of pleasure and freedom. But he consoles himself by thinking when he grows up he will do as he pleases.

How happy he is in the world of his imagination. Everything about him excites him to activity and mischief. He is proof against the fearful gastronomic experiments he makes on himself, and triumphs over the numerous accidents and adventures with which he meets, for nothing seems to hurt him.

He is ever acting on a small scale the heroes of the boys' books that fire his imagination; and he looks with wondering contempt on any calling tamer than that of a soldier, hunter, admiral, or pirate, in one of which exciting professions he will distinguish himself before long.

There is a certain element of pathos in such childish yearnings, not less on account of the simplicity of the dreams, than because the artlessness of the methods with which their realization is attempted.

The love of adventure was exemplified in two boys aged respectively fifteen and sixteen, who not long since set out walking from New York to the West.

When near this city, however, their hearts seemed to have failed them, for one of them sent a postal card to his mother stating where they were and saying that they had decided to return.

As they were passing through Camden on their way back they were detained at the police station. On the two youths were found a couple of loaded and capped pistols and ammunition, and a list of sensational books. The adventurers were relieved of their weapons and sent home.

It is this early devouring of cheap literature, which leads to similar boyish expeditions to seaport and railroad towns whence the cabin-boy or stowaway is to commence his world-dazzling career of gore and glory.

It is not many months since two youngsters were noticed by an official, walking up and down the landing-stage in a mysterious, expectant manner. As their overcoats had a bulky appearance, their observer became suspicious, and questioned them. The youths' unsatisfactory answers finally led to their being detained and examined.

It was another instance of youthful adventure. The bulky overcoats concealed leathern belts, which contained revolvers and ammunition. The would-be hunters were further provided with money and tickets for Nebraska, and declared it was their intention to live in the backwoods there.

A telegram to their parents led to the youths being taken home, probably, ere long, to thank their rescuers for putting a stop to their little romance.

On another occasion, five boys, whose ages varied from ten to fourteen years, got into trouble through camping out. A policeman observed a light underneath a large overturned boat on the shore.

Such an unusual circumstance at once attracted him to the spot. He peeped beneath this improvised hut, and found our five Crusoes, who had dug a hole in the sand, and entered their retreat after the manner of an Eskimo. They had placed lighted candles at different parts of the boat, and were seated on some straw eating apples, and they were singing some comic songs.

Here was a happy scene of romantic boyhood to be rudely interrupted by the prosaic appearance of a commonplace policeman, just as they were commencing a glorious career of camping-out. They had all run away from home, as they informed the officer, who had a deal of trouble in persuading them to come out of their wigwam.

An English lad from a manufacturing town had still more romantic ideas. Arriving in Liverpool, he first amused himself by driving around in a cab all day. His next proceeding was to rig himself out in a new suit of clothes, and of course to purchase the inevitable revolver, without which no hero is genuine.

He then took passage in a Manx steamer and landed in the Isle of Man. There he wandered into the interior, and found the solitude of the mountain district brought back descriptions of similar scenery in his favorite books.

Our little traveler rambled about for a few days, camping out in a primitive rough-ready kind of way and evidently intending to lead the life of the hunters so fascinatingly described in boys's libraries. With this view he began to stalk the game of the country, which in that island happen to be no more wild and formidable than the mountain-sheep.

Whether he partook of many mutton-chops, or looked forward to array himself in a woolly suit in the true Crusoe style history is silent. But as the discovery of the carcases of several bullet-perforated sheep by farmers in the neighborhood, led to the youthful Nimrod's arrest, we presume the want of time alone prevented him from developing into a full-bloom specimen of the lone-scout or the solitary hunter type.

The effect on the youthful imagination of melo-dramatic tales is perhaps more striking in America than elsewhere. The miscreants brought into activity by the cheap tales of criminal life distinctively known as "dime novels," are themselves known as "dime-novel brigands."

Three members of this class, who were brought before the police magistrate of Harlem, were shown to have formed themselves into a band, which, after establishing itself in a mountainous district, was to carry off and hold to ransom beautiful maidens and wealthy tourists. Before making for the hills, the youthful banditti plundered the hotel in which they had passed the night; more, on principle, it would seem, than with a mere view to profit, for their booty consisted only of thirty-six bedroom door-keys. It appeared from a ledger found in their possession that they had begun business with a capital of two hundred dollars, "made at New York."

But most of this sum had been spent before they reached the mountains; and an entry made the second day after their arrival on the scene of their intended exploits, showed that "things already looked blue."

On the third day, the juvenile robbers found it necessary to pawn their solitary pistol; and the only act of highway robbery they succeeded in committing was the theft of some food left on the road by some workmen.

Even this little adventure got them into trouble with a magistrate; but the police with good-natured contempt raised a subscription to pay their expenses back to New York. Thus the heroism of their expedition has been very effectively washed out. But while cheap sensational tales circulate amongst imaginative youths, we are not surprised to find these boy-brigands rivalled by boy-burglars.

As it is with would-be heroes, not criminals, we are now dealing, we omit any further examples of the latter class.

Our subject receives further illustration from the effect that the exploits of the cowboys of Buffalo Bill and others produced on many of our juveniles. To be a cowboy became the rage, and every lad who could get a hold of his mother's clothesline for a lariat or his father's wide-awake for a sombrero practised throwing the lasso, till not a dog could prowl the streets without a good chance of being "yanked" off its legs by a flying rope.

The shrill yell of these lads and the loud cracks of their toy pistols, making day and night hideous, acted as a continual advertisement for the Wild West Show.

Numberless letters were written by schoolboys modestly offering to join the cowboy troupe.

One lad wrote: "I hear every day that you want boys So I should like to see you in private. I have tried to get a quarter to come and see you Because I am sure you would like me. I can sling fence shoot I don't mean to say as I am a marksman but I know how to handle one. I am waiting for an answer."

Another says: "I herd you wanted a few boys to join your compy. I will make a bargain with you if I suit you to do anything you want me to do as long as you keep me in clothes and food I will go with you without wagers except a few cents for pocket money."

These outbreaks can be kept in check, if not entirely avoided, by parents being more particular about the reading matter that gets into the hands of their boys, as well as knowing their haunts and associates. These are the keys to the situation.

THE TWO BILLS.

Two bills were awaiting in the bank for their turn to go into the world. One was a little bill, only one dollar; the other was a big bill, a thousand dollar bill.

While lying there side by side, they fell a talking about their usefulness. The dollar bill murmured out:

"Ah! if I were as big as you, what good I would do! I could move in such high places, and people would be so careful of me, wherever I should go! Everybody would admire me, and want to take me home with them; but, small as I am, what good can I do? Nobody cares much for me. I am too little to be of any use."

"Ah, yes! that is so," said the thousand dollar bill; and it gathered up its well trimmed edge that was lying next the little bill, in conscious superiority. "That is so," it repeated. "If you were as great as I am, a thousand times bigger than you, then you might hope to do some good in the world," and its face smiled a wrinkle of contempt for the little dollar bill.

Just then the cashier comes, takes the little murmuring bill, and kindly gives it to a poor widow.

"God bless you!" she cries, as with a smiling face she receives it. "My dear hungry children can now have some bread."

A thrill of joy ran through the little bill as it was folded up in the widow's hand, and it whispered, "I may do some good, if I am small."

And when it saw the bright faces of her fatherless children, it was very glad that it could do a little good.

Then the little dollar bill began its journey of usefulness. It went first to the baker's for bread, then to the milliner's, then to the farmer's, then to the laborer's, then to the doctor's, then to the minister's, and wherever it went it gave pleasure, adding something to their comfort and joy.

At last, after a long, long pilgrimage of usefulness among every sort of people, it came back to the bank again, crumpled defaced, ragged, softened by its daily use. Seeing the thousand dollar bill lying there, with scarcely a wrinkle or finger mark upon it, it exclaims:

"Pray, sir, and what has been your mission of usefulness?"

The big bill replies: "I have been from safe to safe among the rich, where few could see, and they were afraid to let me go out for lest I should be lost. Few indeed are they whom I have made happier by my mission."

Then the little dollar bill said: "It is better to be small and go among the multitudes doing good, than to be so great as to be imprisoned in the safes of the few."

And it rested satisfied with its lot.

THE ARTISTS' MODEL.

NOW I wonder if any of you, my young readers, know what an artists' model is?

Just a few of you perhaps will, but the majority will say no, and to them, therefore, I must explain.

First of all, an artist, you know, is one who paints and draws pictures, such as you see in papers, or hanging on the walls of rooms, or at exhibitions, if any of you have ever been to any; and in order to paint this particular picture he must have nature to copy from.

If he is a landscape painter he goes to the country, and sits down and paints from the hills, and downs, and cliffs, and sea which are before him, selecting those little bits which he thinks will make the prettiest picture. If he is an animal painter, then he gets a horse or dog or cat, as the case may be, and draws from them. And should he be a figure painter, people come to him to stand or sit in the position he requires, that he may paint from them.

The latter people are called artists' models. They are not all grown up, but are often children who must stand quietly many hours in order to earn money to bring home for their fathers and mothers.

The little girl Lucia is one of these models, and a very good quiet sitter she is. She began to sit when she was quite a small baby, and knows all the studios she goes to, and is so at home in them that she will very quickly tell you if she thinks you are making a pretty picture of her or not.

Her father and mother are Italians, but Lucia, though she wears the Italian costume, was born in England, and speaks English as well as Italian. She is nicely taught, too, can read and write as well as most little girls of nine, and is useful at home, helping her mother to clean and sew and wash.

One small fault she has—she is such a little chatterbox, and if you are not strict with her she will talk all the day about her beautiful Italy, which she hopes one day to visit, when her father saves enough money to take them back to their darling country; about the kind ladies who teach her at the night-schools; about her brother who makes music, as she calls it, in the streets; and her tiny baby sister—the bambino, as she would be called in her own home—who is petted and spoiled by the whole family.

One day she came to me very sad: her darling bambino was ill, very ill; and the tears were in her eyes all day, and she was restless and so fidgety that at last I allowed her to go home an hour earlier than usual.

The next day and the next passed, and no Lucia; so, finding that the remembrance of that little sad face haunted me, I determined to go and see if baby was better.

Lucia's home was not in a very pleasant neighborhood, but amid narrow and crowded streets, and still more crowded houses.

By the help of one or two friendly Italians, however, I found the place, and was shown upstairs to the room where Lucia's father and mother lived. Knocking at the door, I was bidden to enter, but when I did so a very sorrowful sight met my view: a group of women, evidently neighbors and friends, sat huddled and weeping round a fire, and in a corner of the room on a bed there lay the poor little bambino—dead! poor little baby, and, alas! poor mother!

Lucia was not to be seen.

Her mother told me she had been obliged to get a neighbor to take care of her for a few days, as she fretted and grieved so about her sister.

"But what did the bambino die of?" I asked.

"Bronchitis," exclaimed Lucia's mother; "all my babies die so in your wretched cold London. Only Lucia remains, and she shall not die—I take her to Italy, sunny Italy, myself—there we were never sad, only very happy and joyous, and we never want work like here."

So in a few days Lucia came to bid good-bye, the grief for the baby smothered in the pleasure and excitement of seeing her beautiful country.

"No more studios," she said, with a solemn shake of her head. "No artists in Italy, only lovely sunshine and——"

"But how will you earn money?" I cried.

"Oh, my father got vineyards and orange-trees; I pick oranges and sell them, that much better than studios." And so I lost my little model.

BY THE SHORE.

BY L. S.

Chiming a dream by the way
With ocean's rapture and roar,
I met a maiden to-day
Walking alone on the shore.

Walking in maiden wise,
Modest and kind and fair,
The freshness of spring in her eyes
And the fulness of spring in her hair.

Cloud-shadow and scudding sunburst
Were swift on the floor of the sea,
And a mad wind was romping its worst,
But what was their magic to me?

What was the charm of the midsummer skies?
I only saw she was there,
A dream of the sea in her eyes
And the kiss of the sea in her hair.

I watched her vanish in space;
She came where I walked, no more!
But something had passed of her grace
To the spell of the wave and the shore.

And now, as the glad stars rise,
She comes to me rosy and rare,
The delight of the wind in her eyes
And the hand of the wind in her hair.

SOME COMMON ERRORS.

I once went on a short inland excursion from Bengazi, in Africa. With me there was an Englishman, who was on his way home from Constantinople, where he had filled the honorable office of cook to a Pasha, whose name I forget. I need scarcely say that my Englishman was not a very educated man.

In the course of our expedition we found a porcupine, and I was very much amused by the active way in which my companion, on seeing the strange beast, took shelter behind a rock.

"Take care that it doesn't shoot its quills at you!" he exclaimed to me; and from his retreat he looked out, perfectly confident, I am sure, that if I were too venturous, the animal would let fly a shower of darts at me.

The survival of this belief is very curious; for in the countries in which they are native, porcupines are not uncommon, and travelers have had plentiful opportunities of studying the habits of the creatures.

Yet it is still generally supposed by the ignorant, especially in northern Europe and America, that the porcupine can shoot forth its quills, or, at least that, it can protrude and retract them, at will.

The error was put forth by Aristotle and Pliny; and such ancient and respectable names naturally carry great weight; but, in fact, the porcupine can no more protrude or retract its quills than we can protrude or retract the hairs of our head.

The quills in question are, to be exact, nothing more nor less than very large strong hairs or bristles. Their structure is similar to that of a common pig's bristle, of which the porcupine's quill is merely an exaggerated copy.

If you attack a porcupine, he usually turns his back toward you. Should he come into contact with you, one or two of his quills may, not improbably, remain sticking in your clothes or skin; but that is only because they are very superficially attached to the animal. He can erect his bristles just as a cat can erect its fur; and he can shake them and even shake out loose ones, just as we can shake out loose hairs from our heads; but that is all.

The recollection of the cook's kindly meant warnings brings into my mind some vulgar errors which have often been contradicted with authority, yet which are even more lively and cherished than is the error about the porcupine.

Another error, which has been crystalized in our common speech, is to the effect that the fox is very fond of grapes. The fox, such as we know him, is purely and simply a carnivorous animal; and I suspect that, if the alternative of grapes, or nothing were offered to him, he would starve.

There is a kindred animal which destroys a great many grapes, when it can get at them, in Palestine; but this fox is not our fox. Why not put chickens instead of grapes?

I have also heard it stated by a countryman who ought to have been a practical authority on such subjects that the blindworm or slow-worm is capable of inflicting a fatal bite, and that, in short, it is a most dangerous reptile to approach.

This is another error. The worm's bite is scarcely so serious as the bite of an ordinary leech, and it is certainly not poisonous in any sense of the word. Nor is it, as its name might be thought to imply, blind.

On the contrary, it sees very well; but its eyes are very minute. The common mole sees much less clearly; indeed it can probably do no more than distinguish light from darkness; yet it has eyes of a rudimentary sort.

There is greater excuse for the erroneous belief that the mole has no ears; for its hearing apparatus is wholly internal. It is, however, unusually sensitive, as are also its organs of taste and smell.

People who are interested in this subject, and who have patience to wade through the book, may gain a great deal of astonishing information concerning the vulgar errors of the past from Sir Thomas Browne's "Pseudodoxia Epidemica: or inquiries into very many received Tenets and commonly presumed truths"—a work which appeared in 1646.

Good Sir Thomas sets many people right, and convicts half the authors that preceded him of having fallen into the grossest mistakes; yet he also makes the most delicious errors on his own account.

He does't take upon himself to positively deny that the salamander is capable of living in fire: he confines himself to suspecting that it cannot do so, for he is a very cautious old author: but he does assert that elephants and monkeys may be taught to speak.

He is, however, quite sound on a number of points which, in the seventeenth century, were generally misunderstood. He knew, for example that man has the same number of ribs as woman, that there is nothing venomous about the common spider of this country, that bird's eyes are immovable in their heads, and that bodies of people who have been murdered must not be expected to bleed when touched by the murderers. Browne, in fact, was the first who publicly rebuked these and scores of other superstitions.

A kindred common error, and one which has been acted upon within the last year or two, is that a man may legally sell his wife for a pint of ale or porter. I have had long arguments about this with miners up in the north of England, and I have failed to convince them that the law does not sanction any transaction of the kind. The miner usually ends the discussion with, "Well, the law may not sanction it, but Bill Smith and Jem Brown have done it, and the law hasn't interfered." And then, what can one say?

I ought not to omit to mention that this strange belief about the legality of the sale of wives in England is a common article of faith among Frenchmen, educated as well as ignorant. You may see it, solemnly expressed, in several serious French books on England. The great mart, accoring to the most of these works, is Smithfield; "where sales were, until recently, effected almost every day."

Grains of Gold.

The tears of penitents are the wine of angels.

The virtues are lost in self interest, as rivers are in the sea.

Nothing is really beautiful but truth, and truth alone is lovely.

The happiness and misery of men depend no less on temper than fortune.

Knowledge of the world is dearly bought at the price of moral purity.

If you would have a faithful servant, and one that you like, serve yourself.

It is vain to be always looking towards the future and never acting towards it.

Truth does not consist in minute accuracy of detail, but in conveying a right impression.

I will be mindful of the truth, so long as I shall be able. Mayest thou grant me the truth, tell me the best to be done.

Our own opinion of ourselves should be lower than that formed by others, for we have a better chance at our imperfections.

If a man empties his purse into his head, no man can take it away from him. An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest.

As soon as a true thought has entered our mind, it gives light which makes us see a crowd of other objects which we have never perceived before.

Through certain humors and passions and from temper merely, a man may be completely miserable, let his outward circumstances be ever so fortunate.

The knowledge which we have acquired ought not to resemble a great shop without order, and without an inventory; we ought to know what we possess, and be able to make it serve us in need.

Femininities.

Always thank a servant who serves you well.

The one great object of the life of a Moorish woman is to get fat.

Use your own initials for your table linen and silver, not your husband's.

A Scandinavian woman evangelist has driven eight women insane with her preaching.

One of the four state executioners of Austria is a woman. She is large and muscular.

How little do they see what is, who frame their hasty judgments upon that which seems!

A few trays of charcoal placed in a damp and musty cellar will make the air fresh and sweet.

"Let your face always be younger than your bonnet" is a bit of advice every woman should appreciate.

Doctors and clergymen put their titles on their visiting card, but their wives are simply "Mrs. John Smith."

"Woman is the Sunday of man," says a contemporary philosopher, who evidently never once thought about the sermons.

The fashion is creeping in of very short invitations to dinner. To some of the most fashionable London parties guests are invited only one or two days before.

Some of the new imported gloves and thread-lace mitts are delicately perfumed—following a London milliner's fashion of perfuming her choice bonnets and hats.

Sentimental London ladies, to help the starving Hindoos, are sending out stuff for their next season's frocks, to be enriched with marvelous oriental embroidery.

With all his gallantry it took a Frenchman to say this: "To be beautiful a woman must not talk much, or she will contract her mouth in an unbecoming manner."

A French writer judges women by their thumbs. Those with large thumbs are said to be more likely to possess native intelligence, while the small thumbs indicate feeling.

According to a dressmaker who has a record of women's measures for the last 40 years, the average woman's waist has increased in size during that period from three to six inches.

If you want to be fashionable at present you must have chestnut locks. No other tint is permissible. The golden hue is but little thought of, and as to Rubens' red, that is quite "played out" for the nonce.

Among the latest establishments in New York is one that rents the linen portion of bridal outfits. They are loaned at from $2 to $10 per month, that being the outside limit of time occupied by the average wedding tour.

A couple who were divorced by a Texas court three years ago have been re-married in San Francisco. The same wedding ring which did service at the first ceremony was used for the second tying of the nuptial knot.

Proverbs of women: "Women rouge that they may not blush," and "He that loseth his wife and a farthing hath a great loss of his farthing," Italian. The Spaniards say, "There is only one bad wife, and every man thinks he has her."

A wash which will remove the sunburn acquired by out-door sports is made by adding to twelve ounces of elderflower water, six drams of common soda and six drams of powdered borax. Applied to the skin, it will make it as clear and soft as a baby's.

A Washington, D C., lady writes to a New York paper as follows: "I was talking last evening to a friend, and she told me she knew personally a Mrs. Miller, of Staunton, who was a grandmother at 29. She and her daughter were both mothers at 13.

Judge Goebel, of Cincinnati, has refused the applications of two women for licenses to perform marriages. The women were Spiritualists. They stated that at a "meeting" of the Spiritualists they had been authorized to solemnize marriages in the Spiritualistic faith.

A London hostess in search of novelty has given a dinner with a "green velvet tablecloth, with wreaths of Alpine poppies." Another used a white satin cloth, on which were placed "large sacks of white satin tied with silver cord, from which a wealth of white flowers tumbled out."

Housekeepers who have white marble stoops, halls or walks to keep clean can save time and labor by having them washed with a mop which has been dipped in boiling hot water and soda. A good deal of soda should be put in the water and allowed to dissolve. It is said to be astonishingly effective.

A pretty custom in vogue at weddings is the throwing of the bride's bouquet as she goes upstairs to exchange her gown for her traveling costume. She leans over the balustrade and tosses her bouquet to her bridesmaids and the assembled young ladies, who are waiting below with bated breath, for the girl who catches the precious nosegay will be the next bride. It is a funny sight to see dignified belles scramble for that bouquet.

According to a Springfield, Mass., journal a good wife of that city has cured her husband of forgetting her orders by writing them out in verse and making him commit them to memory. He may be seen marching along the street occasionally humming the following to the tune of Yankee Doodle:

Butter, cocoa, raisins, eggs,
Molasses, baking powder,
Vanilla, sugar, cheese and beans,
Salt pork and fish for chowder.

In a car recently some men were talking about the nerve of William Tell in shooting an apple off his son's head. To vex a lady who was listening, and who was a well-known upholder of woman's rights, one of the men said: "That was Mr. Tell. But what did his wife amount to? Why don't history mention his wife?" "I'll undertake to say!" cried the lady, in an excited voice—"I'll undertake to say that she sat up half the night before patching that boy's clothes so that he might look decent to go out!"

Masculinities.

B-natural is the keynote to good-breeding.

Every man is poor who spends more than he has; no man is poor who spends less.

A French anthropologist enumerates 21 characteristic forms of the human nose.

It is barbarous to torture a child through life with a name that provokes a smile whenever it is spoken.

When men grow virtuous in their old age, they are merely making a sacrifice to God of the Devil's leavings.

An Ohio girl, in a breach of promise case, produced 475 letters written to her within a courtship of 120 days.

Socrates was probably not far wrong when he said: "Woman once made equal to man becomes his superior."

The curvature of the earth is such that a straight line a mile long would be 2.04 inches from the surface at either end.

A man with six or seven marriageable daughters says that his house is a regular court house every Sunday night.

You will often find some of the poorest poultry on the top round. And chickens are not unlike men in this respect.

It is very natural for a young friend and a young lover to think the persons they love have nothing to do but to please them.

The Chinese gloss on collar and shirt is no longer the thing. The "domestic finish," a cool, dead white, is now considered correct.

They who disbelieve in virtue because man has never been found perfect, might as reasonably deny the sun because it is not always noon.

If there was one half the effort made to punish criminals that is made to screen them from punishment, we would have less crime and less taxation.

A grocer over in Mantua is supposed to be the honestest man in the world. He chases the flies off the beam of his scales before he allows them to balance.

Mrs. Klubmann: "Going away? You do not know how lonesome it is here of an evening." Mr. Klubmann: "Yes, I do; that's the reason I'm going out."

Fortune is said to knock once at every man's door, but before you can get there the jade is gone. With the lucky ones she walks right in without knocking.

"Train up a child in the way he should go,"—and keep a little ahead of him in the same way during the training, to be sure he goes, adds a modern practical philosopher.

The meanest man so far on record lives in Camden. His wife asked him to give her a pet, some animal that would stick by her, and the next evening he brought home a leech.

Eve must have felt that she had lost one of the chief joys of fresh young love when she reflected that she could not ask Adam if she was the first woman he had ever cared for.

By imagination, a man in a dungeon is capable of entertaining himself with scenes and landscapes more beautiful than any that can be found in the whole compass of nature.

Love is exactly like war in this—that a soldier, though he has escaped three weeks complete on Saturday night, may, nevertheless, be shot through the heart on Sunday morning.

Smith: "Aren't you going to take a vacation this summer, Brown?" Brown: "I'm (hic) taking my vacation now." Smith: "That so?" Brown: "Yep, my (hic) wife left for the country last week."

It makes us proud when our love of a mistress is returned; it ought to make us prouder still when we can love her for herself alone, without the aid of any such selfish reflection. This is the religion of love.

It often does. "Gracious me!" said old Mrs. Blank, who was reading an account of a public dinner. "What's the matter?" inquired old Mr. Blank. "What an awful amount o' toast these men do eat! I should think it would make them awful thirsty."

An odd practice prevails in regard to mourning for deceased relatives in Corea. Any one who has suffered such a loss goes about for a year wearing a kind of pointed basket on his head, which completely hides his face, and no one is permitted to address or speak to him.

At the time of King Edward I. the price of the Bible was $120. A laboring man then received for his work a penny and a half a day, from which it may easily be reckoned that a laboring man could not have purchased a Bible at that time without having the savings of more than 18 years.

Jack: "You know how madly I worshiped Clara Washington?" His sister: "Yes, Jack, and I think she is interested in you." Jack: "Well, I have bought her a beautiful pair of bracelets, but I am afraid they are a little large." His sister, hysterically: "Heavens, Jack! Those are not bracelets!"

A seedy-looking man applied to a Congressional candidate for ten dollars. He said that a few friends of the candidate wanted to make preparations to celebrate his election. "But suppose I am defeated?" "Well, then we can use the money in celebrating your not being elected. We are not particular, as long as we celebrate."

Instead of collecting photographs, autographs, or postage stamps, the young ladies of New York are now said to beg locks of hair from their male friends, which they fasten into an album, writing over it "name, age, color of eyes, date of receiving the memento, and the general remarks as to personal appearance." It is understood that in all cases the "real truth" is entered in these albums as it strikes the owner, the album being "never to be seen by any other than feminine eyes." This being so, the albums are pretty sure to fall into masculine hands.

Recent Book Issues.

Mrs. Emma D. E. N. Southworth's "The Maiden Widow," has just been issued by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philadelphia, to sell at twenty-five cents a copy, retail.

"Laconisms" is a finely-printed and bound work containing some one hundred and fifty-four pages of epigrammatic reflections on various matters of interest and importance to all. Many are wise, others witty, some decidedly useful and a few of abominable ignorance, self-conceit and bad taste. The many marked points of merit, however, almost hide these latter defects. Rev. J. M. P. Otts is the author, and Lippincott & Co. the publishers.

"Bewitched," by Louis Pendleton, is a tale located in the South, and dealing principally with Southern characters. It is Number 10 of "Cassell's Choice Fiction" and that it has obtained admission into such good society is sufficient recommendation as to its general readableness. "Madame Silva," by M. G. McClelland—the volume figuring as Number 11 in the same series—is a story of a somewhat more ambitious character. It is likewise Southern in locality and character and makes excellent summer literature.

Mrs. Mary E. Kail, whom many of our readers will recognize as a valued contributor to THE POST in past days, has published a charming book of poems, which takes its title from the opening piece, "Crown Our Heroes." There is much written in the way of verse that will not pay for perusal, but Mrs. Kail's certainly does not belong to this class. The most marked qualities of her productions are their evident earnestness, naturalness, beauty of language and moral truth. She might have made them more ambitious, but were they so they would not speak as they do now, so straight and clearly to the heart. The work contains some one hundred and fifty pages and nearly as many different poems on subjects that will be read with interest for their own sake as well as for the songful form in which the talented authoress has put them. The book is beautifully bound in cloth, gold embossed and edged. Price, $1.00. Published at Leesville, Ohio.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

"Carmen" Silva, the Queen of Bohemia, opens the *Woman's World* for August with a story entitled "Decbal's Daughter." A paper descriptive of "A Lady of Ancient Egypt," shows how ladies who are now mummies adorned and cared for themselves in the days of Rameses. There are two papers on "Some Irish Industries." A poem by Elisabeth Rachel Chapman is followed by a bright description of "Children's Dresses in this Century," by Constance Wilde. A number of amusing illustrations accompany this article. There are papers on various subjects, among them, "A Plea for the Indifferent," "The Home Arts and Industries Association," "Working Woman's Guild." The fashions are admirably set forth. Special attention should be called to the fashion illustrations in this magazine. Cassell & Co., publishers, New York.

St. Nicholas is as charming for mid-summer as at any other time of the year. As many of the readers will look over its pages on the beach, it appropriately opens with that venerable seashore narrative, "The Story of the Sea Serpent," only this tale is beautifully illustrated and well told. "Two Little Confederates" is a charming war story. "Little Moccasin's Ride on Thunder-Horse" is an exciting escape of an Indian boy from a savage and hostile tribe. "The Dear Dolls" are pictures of what the papooses have to amuse themselves with among the Indians. "Shadow Pantomimes" are some very clever silhouettes which follow one another and tell a story almost without the words. Some other sketches are entitled "A Roman Man-of-war's Man," "The Bell Buoy's Story," and "Children and Authors." The Century Co., New York.

NURSING A BABY IN JAPAN.—The Japanese have a curious way of nursing their babies, for the little things are often tied on to the backs of their mothers or their sisters. It is a common-enough thing to see out of a dozen children at play half of them with babies on their backs. And while their nurses are romping about their charges are either sound asleep or swinging to and fro in a way that is scarcely pleasant to behold.

On the seashore the same sort of sight presents itself. Boys and girls not more than ten years old may be noticed wading or gathering seaweed or shell-fish, and the bulk of them have wee bairns tied on to them. When they stoop to pick up anything, the babies look almost as if they were standing on their heads. And yet though the habit does not seem safe or over-kind, you will hardly ever hear a baby cry. So general is this practice that tiny tots do not carry their dolls in their arms, but have them strapped to their backs.

WHEN a person is disgruntled he thinks his lot as hard as a clinker stuck fast in the grate. But what is to be thought of the hardship of the blind man who lived for seventy years in an English workhouse, and whose existence had been forgotten by all except those immediately about him until his death a few days ago?

THE perfume of violets, the purity of the lily, the glow of the rose, and the flush of Hebe combine in Pozzoni's wondrous Powder.

STRANGE SUPERSTITIONS.

IN Eastern Europe the dark shadows of superstition are being but slowly dissipated by the light of science, and in all classes of society the implicit faith in the ghastly traditions of the Middle Ages remains almost as it existed three centuries ago.

Perhaps the most wide-spread of these popular beliefs is that connected with vampires. In Russia, Poland, Austria, Hungary and Greece, vampirism has a firm hold on the minds of the people. In Germany, France and Italy, a case now and then comes into public notice.

Vampires are popularly supposed to be dead persons who return to the scene of their earth-life during the hours of darkness for the purpose of sucking the blood of the living.

The unfortunate victim of the vampire's nocturnal attention sickens almost imperceptibly and dies in a consumption. It is to stop the course of this mysterious and insidious illness that strange and inhuman means have been employed by the priests and charlatans of all ages.

For hundreds of years bodies have been dug up, and if they appeared fresh-colored or if active decomposition had not set in, horrible rites were performed, the person declared a vampire, and henceforth looked upon as a thing accursed.

Amongst other things employed by those versed in the matter, to ensure the living against visitation by the vampire thus discovered, was to thrust a whitethorn stake through the heart, cut the head off and burn it, and sprinkle the ashes over the earth.

It has, unfortunately, too frequently happened that persons have been buried alive; and something occuring to necessitate the opening of the coffin in after years, it has been discovered that there were spots of blood on the torn winding-sheets, scratches on the body, bites on the hands, an altered position of the corpse, or other marks of the despairing death struggle that took place before life became extinct.

Of course amongst a people where this superstition is rife, these signs are regarded as certain indications of vampirism.

In warm climates where burial takes place within twenty-four hours after death, cases of premature inhumation are far more frequent than in America. On the Lower Danube, heretics, wizards, werewolves, and other excommunicated persons, are believed to turn vampires at their death, and anyone afterwards bitten by them and dying through their instrumentality in turn becomes one of the ghastly fraternity.

In 1857 the principal journal of St. Petersburg reported a case which throws a curious side-light on the state of enlightenment of Russian society of to-day.

Baron Gostvosky, who possessed considerable property at Sabones, near Dantzig, feeling himself near his end, called his son to his bedside, and told him that he had a secret to reveal, and made him swear that he would carry out this, his last request.

The son took the required oath. "My child," said the dying baron, "I am about to die. When I breathe my last, I command you to cut off my head, as I did to my mother and my father; we are a family of vampires, and unless this precaution is taken we cannot repose in our tombs nor let the living rest."

Immediately the breath had left the body of Baron Gostvosky the son fulfilled the horrible behest. A few days after the burial he had the grave opened to see if any abnormal phenomenon had taken place. For this violation of the tomb he was condemned to fifteen days imprisonment.

If this sort of thing can take place in the highest and most cultured society in Russia, the ignorance of the masses may be readily imagined. In Hungary the priests practise fearful rites with a view of putting a stop to the bad habits of these unwelcome visitors from another world.

When a peasant has a child whose health, from some unaccountable cause, is failing, he consults the priest of the village, and with that worthy repairs to the cemetery at the dead of night, opens the grave of the person suspected of vampirism, and thrusts pins and wooden skewers into the heart.

After this operation they reckon that any vampire with any respect for conventionalities will be ashamed to go about molesting people, and will henceforth resist his natural tendency for indulging in sanguinary beverages. The cemetery guardians have special orders to prevent these profanations of the tombs so that the priests have to arrange to make them intoxicated during the time the ceremony above referred to is going on.

The Chinese soldiers, the Algerians and several other half-savage warriors cut the throats of the dead and dying on the battle-field to prevent visitations of the vampires. During the last century in France nothing could shake the popular belief in this superstition.

The Reverend Father Augustin Calmet wrote a learned history of vampires, and received the approbation of the University of Sorbonne. He relates how two officers were appointed by Charles VI. to assist the governor of a small town in Hungary in opening a court of inquiry into the conduct of a vampire who having been dead six weeks, had already managed to suck the blood of nearly all the good folk of that country side.

In his learned dissertation Monsieur Calmet also tells of one Arnold Paul, who, 30 days after he was accidentally killed, visited four persons, who died suddenly in such a manner as to leave no doubt in the minds of the inhabitants of the town that they had been bitten by a vampire.

After mature deliberation and reflection the wiseacres remembered that the defunct Arnold Paul had been bitten by a Turkish vampire, and that, though he had eaten some of the earth from his assailant's grave, this heretofore infallible remedy had not prevented his following the Turk's evil example.

So they dug him up to have a look at him and found all the supposed signs of vampirism. After performing the usual ceremony of thrusting a spike into the body—a proceeding, M. Calmet observes, to which the vampire not unnaturally objected—they cut off his head, burned him, and scattered his ashes in the river.

Even then the matter was not finished. The vampire had killed some cattle, and every one who had eaten of those poor beasts became victims to the dreaded malady; so for five or six years they kept digging up everybody to see what they were like when they had been dead a month or so. In seventeen cases out of forty they performed the ghastly operation of spiking, decapitating and burning the dead.

The name of "vampire" has been employed for many years to designate money lenders and others who live by extortion. This unpleasant appellation is derived from their supposed resemblance to the giant bat of South America in its blood-sucking proclivities. These bats are not unlike the smaller members of the same family common here, but often measure between two or three feet from wing to wing.

In biting goats and small animals it makes a triangular wound, like that produced by a leech. It is probably from the heat of the climate that death sometimes ensues from the bites of these hideous animals, and not from loss of blood occasioned thereby.

THE VITAL AIR.—In common life, at the easy average of eighteen to twenty inspirations a minute, an ordinary man will inhale and exhale a bulk of air amounting to about 4000 gallons a day, and while undergoing violent exertion will use up much more than this. The air, when breathed, is not consumed in the sense of being utterly destroyed, but it is changed. In passing through the lungs, it leaves about one-fifth of its oxygen, and combines nearly two-fifths more with the carbon or waste material of the body in the lungs, and exhales it as carbonic acid. Now, carbonic acid is poison to the lungs. So that air, after having been breathed two or three times, becomes deadly unless purified by the combination with it of more oxygen. For the necessary supply of this life-sustaining element we are dependent, in the city as well as the country, on Nature's laboratory. Here, by the action of forces that are never at rest, by the law of gaseous diffusion—which causes gases of different densities to intermix upon contact, thus diluting the most noxious to a degree of absolute harmlessness in a very short space of time—by the constant movement of wind currents; by means of rain, which washes down atmospheric impurities, and causes them to be absorbed into the earth; by the generation of ozone in the air through the agency of electric currents—by these and other means the life-giving elements of the air are constantly renewed.

Though one of the most important agencies of atmospheric purification, that of trees and vegetation, is, as a rule, wholly wanting in a closely built city, the other means used by Nature are so far effective as to greatly counteract the evils resulting from its crowded population. We say nothing of ill-ventilated houses or filthy streets, since these are, of course, the most potent means by which the health-giving air is rendered an agent of disease and death. They are in no sense inevitable, even in the most densely peopled city.

ONLY A DOG.—He was a brindle cur, and had nothing about him to excite admiration. But as he stood shivering under the "L" station at Fifty-ninth street and Third avenue, New York, his loneliness and entire misery drew a sympathetic glance now and then from a passer-by.

He did not seem to be a city dog; he appeared too shy and ignorant of city ways for that; and he looked anxiously into the face of each newcomer as if seeking a friend. He tried to get on a car but the conductor yelled and a passenger kicked at him, so he sneaked behind one of the iron posts and shivered more miserably than ever.

Two little girls came along and stopped a moment to speak to "poor little doggie," who attempted a wag of the tail in response. Then they patted him and spoke kindly to him, and so cheered the poor little waif that he frisked about them and whined for joy.

A heavy, lumbersome, brewery wagon bore down on them. With the rattle overhead and the Babel of noise about them, the two little tots did not heed the rapidly nearing danger or hear the shout that went out to them from the sidewalk. But the homeless dog did. Springing between the children and the advancing horses, he barked, his shrill voice rising above the clamor of the street.

It was all done in a moment, the wagon rolled on; the children, spellbound with fear, stood still; the dog in a last desperate effort to repay the kindness shown to him, hurled himself at the advancing horses. One child is brushed aside and the other clutched by a friendly hand as the horses swerved for a moment at the dog's attack.

The brewery wagon went on its way, rocking and swaying, and two tear-dimmed little faces peered out from the sidewalk at a little heap on the stones of the street.

Their defender had given his life in grateful remembrance of their kindness.

He was only a dog; he knew no better.

R. R. R. RADWAY'S READY RELIEF

A Cure for All Summer Complaints.

A halfteaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will in a few moments cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Nausea, Vomiting, Heartburn, Nervousness, Sleeplessness, Sick Headache, Diarrhœa, Dysentery, Cholera Morbus, Colic, Flatulency, and all Internal Pains. For Cholera and severe cases of the foregoing Complaints see our printed directions.

IT IS HIGHLY IMPORTANT THAT EVERY FAMILY KEEP A SUPPLY OF

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

Always in the house. Its use will prove beneficial on all occasions of pain or sickness. There is nothing in the world that will stop pain or arrest the progress of disease as quick as the Ready Relief.

Where epidemic diseases prevail, such as Fevers, Dysentery, Scarlet Fever, and other malignant diseases RADWAY'S READY RELIEF will, if taken as directed, protect the system against attacks, and if seized with sickness quickly cure the patient.

A FAMILY NECESSITY.

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DR. RADWAY & CO.:

Your valuable medicines are a necessity in our family, we entirely rely on the Ready Relief and Pills for what they are recommended, and they never fail to give satisfaction.

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Malaria In All Its Forms,

FEVER AND AGUE.

Radway's Ready Relief

Not only cures the patient seized with malaria, but if people exposed to it in chills and fever districts will every morning on getting out of bed take twenty or thirty drops of the READY RELIEF in a glass of water and drink it, and eat, say a cracker, they will escape attacks.

PRACTICING WITH R. R. R.

MONTAGUE, TEXAS.

Dr. Radway & Co.: I have been using your medicines for the last twenty years, and in all cases of Chills and Fever I have never failed to cure. I never use anything but your READY RELIEF and PILLS.

THOS. J. JONES.

There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure Fever and Ague, and all other Malarious, Bilious and other fevers, aided by RADWAY'S PILLS, so quickly as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF is a cure for every Pain. Toothache, Headache, Sciatica, Lumbago, Neuralgia, Rheumatism, Swelling of the Joints, Sprains, Bruises, Pains in the Back, Chest or Limbs.

The application of the Ready Relief to the part or parts where the pain or difficulty exists will afford instant ease and comfort.

It was the first and is THE ONLY PAIN REMEDY that instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays inflammation and cures congestion, whether of the Lungs, Stomach, Bowels or other glands or organs by one application.

Price fifty cents per bottle. Sold by druggists.

RADWAY'S REGULATING PILLS

The Great Liver and Stomach Remedy.

Perfect Purgative, Soothing Aperient. Act Without Pain. Always Reliable and Natural in Operation.

A Vegetable Substitute for Calomel.

Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated with sweet gum, purge, regulate, purify, cleanse and strengthen. RADWAY'S PILLS for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Loss of Appetite, Headache, Constipation, Costiveness, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals, or deleterious drugs.

What a Physician Says of Radway's Pills.

I am selling your R. R. Relief and your Regulating Pills, and have recommended them above all pills and sell a great many of them, and have them on hand always, and use them in my practice and in my own family, and expect to, in preference of all Pills. Yours respectfully,

DR. A. C. MIDDLEBROOK, Doraville, Ga.

DYSPEPSIA.

DR. RADWAY'S PILLS are a cure for this complaint. They restore strength to the stomach, and enable it to perform its functions. The symptoms of Dyspepsia disappear, and with them the liability of the system to contract diseases.

RADWAY'S PILLS AND DYSPEPSIA.

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DR. RADWAY: I have for many years been afflicted with Dyspepsia and Liver Complaint, and found but little relief until I got your Pills and Resolvent, and they made a perfect cure. They are the best medicine I ever had in my life. Your friend forever. WILLIAM NOONAN.

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ETERNAL FITNESS.

A sailor for sea,
And a spinster for tea,
A lawyer for talking, and a soldier for fighting:
A baby for noise,
And a circus for boys,
And a typewriter man to do autograph writing.
A banker for chink,
And a printer for ink,
A leopard for spots, and a wafer for sticking:
And a crack base-ball flinger,
An opera singer,
A shotgun, a mule, and a choir for kicking.

—BURDETTE.

Well connected—The bucket.

A rising man—A growing lad.

Cranky things—Hand organs.

A round trip—Falling over a marble.

The farmer for the fair—A husbandman.

Marriage is no uneven game, it is a tie.

How to mark table linen—Upset the gravy.

Long sermons are spoken of as clerical errors.

It is "put up or shut up" with the umbrella.

Stands to reason—The gentleman who has the floor.

A good way to get into a scrape is to shave with a dull razor.

"Talk is cheap"—but not when a counselor is pleading for you.

A kitchen proverb — Things rubbed against a grater become less.

There is no use crying over spilled milk. It may be three parts water.

A man who does not know anything will tell it at the first possible chance.

How to be happy, though married, is one of the easiest problems in Chicago. You simply get a divorce.

When a woman busies herself with a hammer and nails it is difficult to tell what she is driving at.

A complete set of buttons for a coat of paint, and a pair of stirrups for a saddle of mutton are wanted.

"You and Jones do not seem to be as thick as you were. Does he owe you anything?" "No; he wants to."

A matter of money. What the depositor wants to know is not that his money is all right, but that it's all left.

If you wish to fatten a young baby what should you do with it?—Throw it out of the window, and it will come down plump.

A Western newspaper says that two freight cars can so press a man that he won't be over six inches thick at any spot. That's too thin.

An exchange contains an article entitled "The Devil's Funeral." For the sake of poor humanity we hope they took the precaution to bury him deep.

Employer: "You come to your work later and later every morning! Can you explain?" Young clerk: "Yes, sir; I go to bed every night later and later!"

There is a strange partiality shown in giving the elephant, which has a fly-proof hide, a tail at both ends, while the thin-skinned horse has a fly-brush at only one end.

In Chicago. Boy: "Please, sir, couldn't you help a little boy who never had any papa or mamma?" Mr. Lakeside: "Eh! what?" Boy: "Yes, sir. Divorced before I was born." Pockets a dollar.

Customer, to restaurant proprietor: "That coffee I just had wasn't as good as my mother used to make, by a long shot." Proprietor: "It is the best we can do, sir, at five cents a cup. I s'pose your mother got ten for hers."

Mrs. Goodweather: "It must be dreadful to be buried prematurely." Mr. Goodweather: "Oh, I don't know. I wouldn't worry, my dear; it won't happen to you." "Well, I hope not." "No, love. You'll never be buried too soon."

Doubtful party, after partaking heartily of the free lunch: "Gimme a glass of water, please." Bartender: "Don't you feel a little mean to call for water after eating all that free lunch?" Doubtful party: "Well, I don't feel quite right. That tripe, mister, ain't what it ought to be."

"Well, there's the pie," said the woman to the tramp. "If you are as hungry as you say you are why don't you eat it? What are you thinking of?" "Madam," he replied, thoughtfully, "I have an aged mother in the poor house, and I'm her only hope. I was thinking if I ought to take any chances."

Uncle Rascus, to postmaster: "Has yo' got any letters fo' me, boss?" Postmaster: "Nothing to-day, Uncle Rastus." Uncle Rastus: "No postal blards, or stamps or nothin'?" Postmaster: "No; were you expecting to hear from somebody?" Uncle Rastus: "No; I don' expec' ter hear from nobody, sah, but I was passin' by an' I thought I wud jess step in an' patronize de 'stablishment."

Bill Bluster, while in a temper, insulted rich old Stronger. A few days after, happening to meet him, he apologized. "Mr. Stronger," said he, "the other day, when I was angry, I'm told I insulted you. I'm sorry for it, and beg your pardon." "Oh, that's all right, William," was the response. "We are all liable to do wrong occasionally. That's all right." "Yes, but look here. You mustn't feel proud over it because I'm honest enough to ask yer pardon, for, understand you, I'd ask the pardon of a dog if I'd insulted him. It's the principle of the thing I'm after. I know yer an old hypocrite, but at the same time I've insulted you, and I'll ask yer pardon!"

WHAT OLD MEN HAVE DONE.—We so often hear people say, "Oh, I am too old to begin that now!" that we are apt at last to begin to regard as a valid reason what is too often merely an excuse for laziness. At any rate, there are plenty of instances to prove that new studies may be commenced, new undertakings ventured on, in middle life and, sometimes, extreme age.

For example: Socrates learned to play music shortly before his death; Plutarch began to study Latin when he was past seventy; Cato was eighty when he commenced to learn Greek; the philosopher Theophrastus began his greatest work at the age of ninety; Cicero's late study of agriculture is well known; the antiquary Spelman reversed the order, forsaking farming at the age of fifty, and then laying the foundations of his fame as lawyer and scholar.

St. Aulaire, the "French Anacreon," did not begin to write till he was seventy; at about the same age Dr. Johnson set himself to acquire the Dutch language. Dryden was sixty-five when he published his "Virgil;" Ogilby, another well-known translator of Homer and Virgil, was past fifty before he began to study the original languages; and Koornhert, the famous teacher, only ten years younger. Benvenuto Cellini wrote his autobiography at fifty-eight; Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" were not commenced till the poet was fifty-four; and Franklin was forty before he commenced his investigations into the subject of electricity. But perhaps the most remarkable instance of what old men have undertaken are the "Memoirs" of Ludovico Mondaisesco, which he wrote at the age of 115.

UGLY AND PRETTY.—A pretty girl writes, asking pity for the troubles of a pretty girl. She says it is a perfect nuisance to be pretty; perhaps she over estimates the trouble—and herself. Her ideas are, at least, funny. She says: "An ugly girl can go anywhere or do anything, and no notice is taken of her; but a pretty girl is watched every instant, and admiration from strangers does get to be such a bore. Of course, it's nonsense, but that doesn't alter the fact. Take a small illustration. An ugly girl holds out her railway ticket for the collector to take. In doing so his hand slightly presses her own. She knows she isn't bewildering on sight, and she can reasonably regard the touch as accidental. Not so with the pretty girl. She is bound to construe such a thing as a flirtation advance. And so she is compelled to repel it or—not."

MORE HASTE, LESS SPEED.—There is truth in these old adages. Some people seem to be always in a hurry, and yet never accomplish much; others never to be hurried, and yet do a very great deal. Some begin a thing and leave it partially completed, and hurry off to something else.

A better plan is to complete whatever you undertake before you leave it, and be thorough in everything; it is the going back from one thing to another that wastes valuable time. Deliberate workers are those who accomplish the most work in a given time and are less tired at the end of the day than many who have not accomplished half as much; the hurried worker has often to do his work twice over, and even then it is seldom done in the best manner, either as to neatness or durability.

AND then the "spatting." Somewhere down East a married pair were in the habit of airing their differences audibly. In these spats the wife, having the longer tongue, was usually the winner. The result was made known in one case to an inquiring neighbor, who asked where he could find Mr. McBlank, in these words: "I don't know; I guess he's up-stairs hatin' himself."

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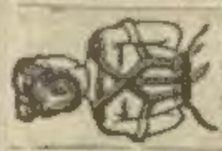

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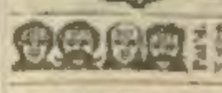

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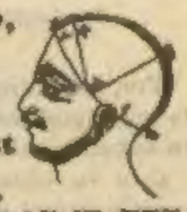

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Mrs. De Saussure will be at her residence, as above, after September 1st, where she will be pleased to meet the parents of pupils who wish to apply for membership of her family.

Meanwhile she may be addressed care of Packer Collegiate Institute, Brooklyn, New York.

Mrs. De Saussure cites, by permission, the following

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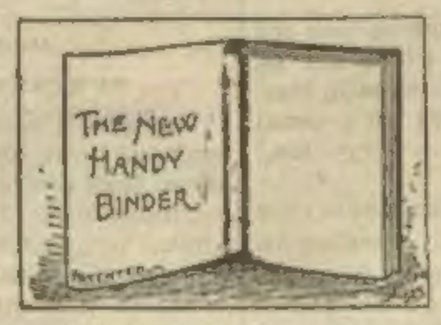

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Address,

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
725 Sansom St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Latest Fashion Phases.

For traveling cloaks there are plain and fancy vigognes, or plain thin tweed ones, in several varieties.

One in cinnamon vigogne is trimmed with a broad fancy gold braid, which runs down each edge of the plain, straight falling fronts and the collar. Down the centre of the back is one box-pleat (which spreads out below the waist), and a broad gold braid passes over this and then inside the cloak, tying around the waist and falling with long tasseled ends in front. The upper part is somewhat in the Mother Hubbard style.

Another, also with the straight fronts, in a light-grounded vigogne, with a pine pattern over it in a darker shade, is trimmed with a shot velvet in a peculiar way. The velvet composes the collar, a small point at the back, and a full front, which is partly separate from the cloth and forms a jacket bodice.

Handsome cords in the shape of cloak and velvet, come from each side of the throat and loosely tie over in front.

The other popular shape is of thin cloth (which can be of any shade of grey or fawn-color), close-fitting at the back, but hanging full in front, with a deep pointed hood, silk lined, and a wide ribbon tied in loops and long ends where the full skirt pleats are put in. The wide revers in front are of silk, and so is the lining of the sleeves, which are turned back and prettily tied in with ribbon.

The long evening wraps are made in all the styles described above, and are in soft silk or fancy materials. Many are lined with shot silk or shot satin Merveilleux.

There are some extremely pretty little mantelets of velvet, lace, and jet in several shapes, a particularly handsome one having long ends in front, richly trimmed with beads.

Another specialty this season are the foulard gowns. One in pale terra-cotta with a black tracery over it was trimmed in a most stylish manner with wide black moire ribbon. The bodice was very novel.

Another in dark blue, with a wild design in white wandering over it, had deep white lace arranged up one side, resembling Carrickmacross point, with blue ribbons run in and out. The rest of the skirt was gracefully draped.

A pale fawn trimmed with dark brown was also stylish, the bodice being full in front, with scarf ends of alternate striped dark brown ribbon and folded foulard, coming from the side seams, high up under each arm, inclining downwards and fastening across the front and a pretty way it is, as it gives a fulness to the figure above the band and a slimness of the waist lower down.

In the soft silk and muslin bodices the deep band is sometimes of folded ribbon, crossing over to one side, and then hanging long in loops and ends; or it may be of alternate lace insertion and narrow ribbons. Chaudron, terra-cotta, biscuit, dark blue, and reseda, with large patterns running over them, and also white and gray are the fashionable colors in foulards.

Some of the white embroidered cambric gowns, and fancy figured cream soft silks are so lavishly trimmed with delicate deep lace, that they are most beautiful to look at, especially touched up with pale colors, or the new shade of rather dark green.

For evening gowns, black lace over white, vieux rose, or apple-green, is arranged with excellent effect.

The richest brocades are now in use for the fashionable tea-gowns, which act as dinner gowns. Crepe de Chine, satin Merveilleux, gauze, and silks are all pressed into service, with the addition, very often, of the costliest lace.

One *specialite* is a gown of brocade or rich faille, close-fitting at the back, opening in front over a lace petticoat, draped over color. The yoke is of rich openwork passementerie, from which rises a high Medicis collar of the same, semi transparent curved outward. The puffed sleeves end at the elbow, and fit into tight ones of the same rich passementerie, reaching almost to the wrist. A scarf of twisted gold and silk falls in front, and completes the costume.

A more simple tea gown was to be seen in vieux rose cashmere, with long hanging sleeves, lined with cream satin, with tight ones of cashmere, a full waistcoat of cream satin, and dainty bows of vieux ribbon down the right side. The newest petticoats for wearing under smart gowns are of cream washing silk, trimmed with several insertions of lace, and one deep frill.

In millinery there is wonderful variety in hats and bonnets. The tulle bonnets to match costumes, with or without strings and with a cluster of flowers or leaves and also the mignonette and other floral ones, are as dainty and as light as skilled fingers can make them.

A garden hat of cream flowered net with a cluster of leaves, is pretty.

The parasols are also in great varieties, some lovely white ones having white enamelled sticks, and creamy Algerian onyx tops set in gold coronets.

The following new perfumes have been recently introduced:—White Hawthorne Blossom, Albarosa, Xylopia, Sweet Violets and Ixia. The albarosa perfume soap is the latest novelty. The sachets in large and small sizes, of peau d'Espagne are very fragrant, and are now much in use for putting into the fronts of high or low bodices.

The season brings some beautiful new fans. Several have birds painted on gauze such as a pheasant on a red ground, mounted on gold sticks; a large white cockatoo, with outspread wings covering the white ground and almost forming the whole fan; a pair of white doves gazing coyly at each other from the ends of some purple heather sprays.

Other fans of delicate-hued gauze have narrow satin ribbons stitched on in rows of zigzag. A silver-gray gauze has silvered wood sticks. A lovely red fan with violet wood sticks, was painted with a large cluster of shaded poppies. A dark grey fan had a spray of lilac thrown around the top, and the edges cut to the shape of the flowers. A very novel fan was of black gauze, mounted on gilded wood, with a design of flying swallows painted on, and sprays of grass gilded and touched up with small gold beads. The design was nothing uncommon when the fan was open, when it was closed the word "Remember" in gold beads was seen standing out distinctly up the side. Hence the novelty and ingenuity.

A black fan, with a crescent moon, stars and billowy white clouds, painted in neutral tints, and touched up with steel beads, had "Night" standing out when closed. The beads were cleverly contrived to form the word. The last fan would do for anyone personating Night at a fancy ball.

There are a great many novelties in parasols, en-tout-cas, and umbrella handles, recently brought from Paris.

In gloves, Suedes still carry off the palm, in delicate shades of tan, in darker colors, and black. For country wear, Suede chevrette are worn.

For wearing in the house for silk or muslin skirts, are loose, jackets of India or China silks, trimmed with new colored silk laces or with Valenciennes. Some have lace vests, with straight loose fronts and shorter backs fitted very closely, with handsome waist ribbons in front only, while others are shirred on the shoulders and again at the waist line.

In many of these garments the partly flowing sleeves are used. There are also charming morning jackets from Paris houses, made of Khedive red silk, striped with white or blue, and trimmed with real Irish point lace. White pilot cloth jackets are dainty additions to a summer wardrobe, these lace-edged, and bordered with a narrow braiding in gold or silver. Ready made, these jackets are very expensive.

Stamped and braided at home the cost is comparatively little. Stamping designs of any device and width can now be purchased at nearly every store where fancy goods are sold.

Odds and Ends.

THE CARE OF FURNITURE.

To all men and more especially to all women, there comes sooner or later a time when they desire a little change in their surroundings. I am now referring to the annual outing which has come to be considered one of the necessities of life (one wonders how our grandparents managed it) but to the actual surroundings of our daily existence.

There is, we all know, a fashion in furniture, and the chairs and tables considered the perfection of upholstery, some 30 years ago, are now shuddered at as horrors, impossible to be endured. But a change of furniture, however gibly it may be referred to in books or spoken of by our rich relations, is to ordinary persons a matter of serious consideration and an expense that must be carefully reckoned with.

The solid suites covered in flaring red or brocatelle of the most (nowadays) impossible colors, are dying out, and to but few people is it given to see a lady, one who prided herself on her taste, reeling gracefully on a bright green rep-colored lounge in blue dress, surrounded by gilt and marble consoles, and occasional chairs upholstered in magenta brocade; and yet that was a real combination seen not so many years ago.

We have learnt the value of neatral tints, and the horrors of aniline dyes; we eschew suites, and we adore Japanneries of all sorts and sizes; but all the same, even these, artistic as they are in themselves, require a little caution in their use. We are apt to take our art in "crazes."

Some five or six years since worshipped sunflowers, and tried to live up to our blue and white teapots; and then every room swarmed with lanky storks and paddy birds; sunflowers (real and sham) encumbered every vase and corner; our girls eschewed tailor-made dresses and linen collars and cuffs, enveloping themselves in "saques" and "draperies," whose grace depended solely on the taste (?) of the wearer.

There was a day of art work and every drawing-room was smothered in high art antimacassars, table-covers, and plaques adorned with works proudly styled conventional, and which might ligitimately have appeared in a mosque, for it represented nothing "in Heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth." We are tired of embroidery and painting, and no wonder, and have rushed into drapery for relief.

There is a great deal about rooms that can be improved and renovated by deft fingers and clever brains, and a dainty home can be evolved from the most unpromising materials.

Though we boast no suite, chair-covers will get shabby and sofa look untidy at the corners, our wicker chairs get stained, and so on.

It has been the fashion for some time to have wickerworked chairs, lounges, tables, etc., when quite new these are charming, but they get shabby terribly quickly—take courage, they can be just as easily repaired.

Rip off all cushions and draperies, carefully noting how they were put on; have the chair, scrubbed thoroughly clean, and rinsed with soda to get rid of any grease, then, having put on a pair of gloves lest the heat of your hands should dim the enamel, proceed to paint it all over with any color of enamel paint you may choose as suitable.

A sort of ivory color looks very pretty and fits almost any room, or else coral color, robin's-egg blue, willow-green, etc., are all extremely dainty, especially if the cushions, etc., are all to be covered in art muslin, as they so often are.

There is a thin Oriental looking stuff that makes a lovely drapery and cover for these same wickerwork articles. Quite shabby-looking doors and shutters can also be made things of beauty with this enamel and patterns of Japanese leather paper. By the bye, if you have a pretty wall paper, the panels of the doors look lovely done with this paper and then carefully varnished.

Either method is better than those terrible painted panels, with impossible flowers and shrubs supporting miraculous birds in defiance of any known laws of either prospective or gravitation. Pictures of flowers and fruits and birds may be and often are, exquisite ornaments, but none of the three are in their places on the seat of a couch or sprawling on the carpet.

To talk of walking on roses and other flowers may sound very well in poetry, practically it a slippery and rather repulsive mode of progression.

It is better to cover one's furniture with some soft, almost neutral tint, that will clash as little as possible with the toilettes that may be worn in the room, which will allow of dashes of bright color that may be varied with the varying season, and above all, do not have your furniture covered with so gorgeous as to require "loose covers." If your furniture is shabby and you do not feel inclined for either the trouble or expense of really recovering, it make cretonne covers by all means, but see that these covers really fit, and fit tightly.

An unusual accomplishment for a dog is shelling peas; but a setter who lives in a town near Boston shows that it is entirely a canine possibility. He takes a pod in his mouth, and, after giving it a dexterous twist with his teeth, which opens it, drops it on the ground. As the peas roll out of the open pod, he takes them up, one by one, and eats them with evident relish, leaving the despised pod untouched.

It is no great matter to live lovingly with good-natured, humble, and meek persons, but he who can do so with the froward, wilful, ignorant, peevish and perverse, has true charity.

Confidential Correspondents.

NANNIE.—It is very usual for persons to ask their friends for their photographs when they have had them taken.

MABEL.—1. In introductions, "The pleasure is mutual," or something to that effect; it is merely a polite phrase, which many persons use under the circumstances.

HOUSE.—Ordinary pitch tar is a very efficacious remedy for dry rot. Give your boards a good coating with it. Wood sprinkled with a solution of common salt will not show the appearance of dry rot.

PETINNE.—It is not considered in good taste to display jewelry except in evening dress. 1. It would depend whether morning or evening as to what dress should be worn. In any case one would dress well.

SADITHA.—A terrace is a raised walk or platform of earth supported on one or both sides by a bank of earth generally covered with turf; it is a name also sometimes applied to a balcony, also the flat roof of a house, as the Oriental houses are covered with terraces.

MODERN.—Fifty years ago the boy who appeared on the street on the Fourth of July without a red, white and blue cockade on the lappel of his jacket was looked upon by those who wore them as the children of Tories, and were frequently attacked and beaten for the omission.

CONSTANCE.—By your own showing, you seem to have been behaving very badly; you must make up your mind which of the two you intend to take, and tell the other what you have done. You will be rightly served if you get neither.

NANCY.—The popular stories of the great value of certain coins are fabulous, although some few of particular dates have been purchased by persons at high prices. It depends whether any collector is desirous of purchasing any particular coin to complete a collection.

SMITH.—1. Chicago is pronounced as if spelt Shee-cah-go. The "ch" is soft. 2. Iowa, a western State of North America, was organized as a territory June 12th, 1838, and admitted into the Union December 28, 1846; capital, Des Moines.

MABEL.—Explain to the clergyman, and he will arrange it. The use of the left hand and the fourth finger is a matter of tradition. There is no actual sacred or legal meaning attached to it. Some religious bodies used no rings at all till recently.

ETHEL M.—No. There would be no impropriety in doing so. A gentleman, when he meets a lady, would turn back to walk with her in preference to keeping her standing. 2. Wait patiently, no doubt if the gentleman is interested in you he will find some means of becoming more intimate with you.

VIVA.—1. The translations are as follows: "I love you a little, I do not love you at all, I love you with all my heart, to distraction." 2. "May the happiest fate befall; like to the flowers in the broad meadows may you be always cheerful and contented, may this beautiful world always smile upon you."

HETTY C.—Palpitation of the heart is often caused by indigestion, which may be cured sometimes by taking a course of medicine. We are unable to tell you how to distinguish between palpitation caused by indigestion and heart disease. If you suffer from palpitation, whatever the cause be, we advise you to consult a medical man at once, as he would no doubt soon put you right.

BANKING.—People wishing to reduce stoutness should not take puddings, pastry, cakes, fat meat, nor vegetables except French beans, no milk, cocoa, stout, nor beer; take plenty of exercise, and bathe frequently. Sip a tumblerful of hot water, one hour before each meal, and on rising, and going to bed.

HEADACHE.—The easiest plan would be to ask the lady to let you have one of her rings which will fit the third finger on her left hand, or else to ask her to accompany you when you go to purchase the ring. 2. The ring referred to is an engagement ring, and should, of course, be presented at once, no matter how long before there will be a probability of the marriage taking place.

AMERICAN.—1. You should certainly have recognized the gentleman, as after having consulted him professionally you did not need an introduction. 2 It would have been quite right for you to have bowed to him first. 3. It is just a trifle too uncertain; a little more practice and care and it would be good. 4. We do not believe in the certainty of telling the character by the handwriting.

ECLIPSE.—Fifty millions of millions of miles is a very pretty little distance. Yet that is the amount of space which separates us from the star 61 Cygni, supposed to be the nearest to us of all the bodies in space outside our own planetary system. The usual calculations as to how long it would take an express train or a cannon ball to reach 61 Cygni would be absurd in the face of such figures, but we may just mention that the light which now reaches us from this star started on its journey about eight years ago.

REDLICH.—A cento primarily signifies a cloak made of patches. In poetry it denotes a work wholly composed of verses, or passages promiscuously taken from authors, only disposed in a new form or order, so as to compose a new work and a new meaning. Ausononius has laid down the rules to be observed in composing Centos. The pieces may be taken either from the same poet, or from several; and the verses may be either taken entire or divided into two; one half to be connected with another half taken elsewhere; but two verses are never to be taken together. Agreeable to these rules he has made a pleasant nuptial Cento from Virgil.

LILLYWHIM.—The process of making chocolate caramels is not one that could be carried out on a small scale; neither is it simple enough to be understood by an inexperienced sugar boiler; indeed the making of caramels is very difficult. To make black currant wine, put into a dry cask equal quantities of black currant juice and water; draw the juice off as for jelly, and bottle the water, which must, however, be quite cold before it is added to the juice. To each gallon of the liquid add two pounds of loaf sugar; let the cask be quite full, and skim it well, covering lightly for a few days to keep out the dust; then, when quite still, bung it down, first adding a quart of brandy to six gallons of the wine. It may be bottled in six months, but will be better if kept longer.